



READING  
ABBEY.







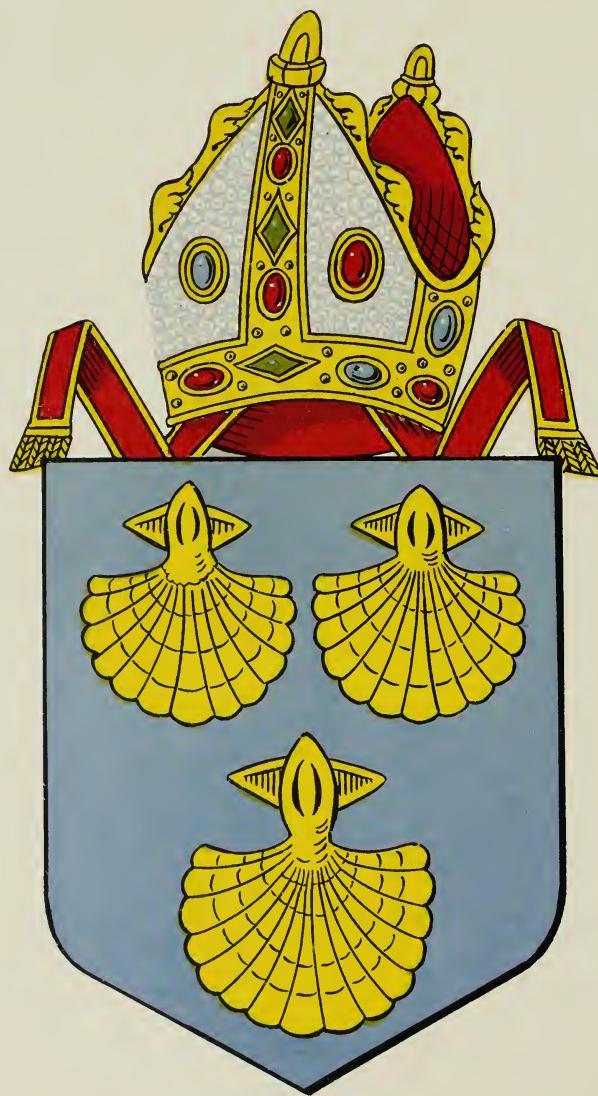
# **R**eading **A**bbey.





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The Arms of the Abbey.

FIG. I.

*Frontispiece.*

# Reading Abbey.

“**M**obile illud et regale **M**onasterium de **R**edyngē.”

BY

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Illustrated by **P**lans, **V**iews and **F**acsimiles.



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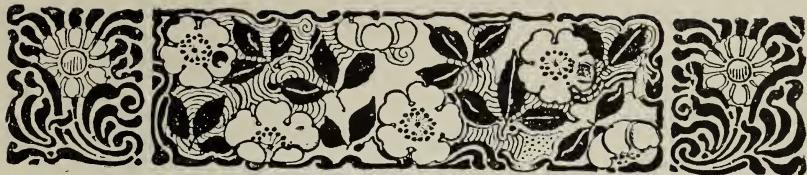
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To the Memory  
of  
**R**eading **A**bbey.

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*Sic transit gloria mundi !*





## Preface.



READING ABBEY was for over four centuries a renowned monastic foundation, and, as its annals abundantly testify, played an important part in the political and religious history of the period.

Unhappily, so extensive has been the demolition of the fabric, owing in part to ruthless man and in part to time's "effacing finger," that little more than an ivy-clad ruin remains of that "noble and "royal Monastery of Reading," with its "monks of unwearied and "delightful hospitality"; and, as a further result of this destruction, the historical associations have sunk into unmerited obscurity.

The long series of national events which the Abbey has witnessed claim for it a permanent place in our national history. Few religious houses have been so favoured by the Sovereign, or selected for so many Parliaments of the realm, royal marriages and funerals, or great secular and ecclesiastical councils.

From a local standpoint an almost equal interest attaches to the memorable struggle for commercial and civil liberty, which for 250 years was waged by the Guild Merchant against the Abbot, its feudal Lord.

Lastly, Reading Abbey was the scene of one of the most dramatic incidents in the "Suppression of the Monasteries," when

Hugh Faringdon, the last Abbot, for conscience' sake, sacrificed an earthly mitre and the friendship of his King for a crown of martyrdom.

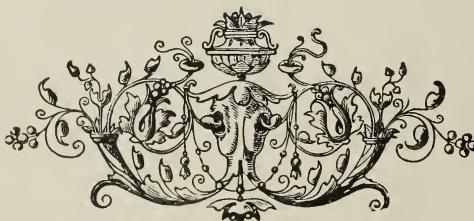
A free but discriminating use has been made of the standard histories of Reading by the Rev. Charles Coates, John Man, and J. Doran, as well as of the more general work on Monasticism by Dugdale ("Monasticon Anglicanum"). For statements drawn from less well-known sources, care has been taken to give bibliographical references, and it is hoped that these references will be useful to readers anxious to study the subject in greater detail.

The proof-sheets have been kindly read through by my friend Mr. W. M. Childs, M.A.

J. B. H.

"ABBOTS BROOK,"

READING.





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## Chapter i.

### *The Abbey.*

Foundation : Precincts : Church.

#### *Foundation.*

**K**ENRY I. "built this monastery between the rivers "Kennet and Thames, in a spot calculated for the "reception of almost all who might have occasion "to travel to the more populous cities of England, "where he placed monks of the Cluniac Order, who "are at this day a noble pattern of holiness, and an "example of unwearied and delightful hospitality." Thus wrote that faithful chronicler William of Malmesbury<sup>1</sup>, only a few years after the founding of the Abbey in 1121.

As the site for his magnificent foundation the King chose a gentle eminence, about three-quarters of a mile from the confluence of these rivers, and commanding a beautiful view of the adjacent hills and valleys, a view now destroyed by railway embankments and modern buildings.

#### *Precincts.*

The precincts included an area of about 30 acres, round which (except on the south side, where the Holy Brook<sup>2</sup> and Kennet

<sup>1</sup> "Gesta Regum Anglorum" (Rolls Series), p. 489.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly called the "Hallowed Brook."

form a natural boundary) ran a thick and lofty wall—a *mur d'enceinte*. Within the space thus enclosed were grouped the various monastic buildings necessary for the religious and social life of the inmates. Roughly speaking, the boundaries formed a rectangle, as is shown on the accompanying Plan.

The west wall commenced at the South Gate, close to where now stands the Abbey Hall, and passed behind the “Saracen’s” “Head” in a northerly direction, about 50 yards to the east of the present east frontage line in the Market Place, until it reached the Compter Gate. Including St. Laurence’s Church and the Hospitium, the boundary next continued along what was known until recent times as the Little Vastern, and is now practically Blagrave Street, turned eastward in a line with the Plummary wall, and enclosed what is now the North Forbury Road. On reaching the east end of this road, the *mur d'enceinte* turned in a southerly direction, finishing at the north end of Blake’s<sup>1</sup> Bridge (formerly called “Orte Bridge”) over the Kennet. From this point the Abbey precincts were coterminous with the north bank of the Kennet and Holy Brook, as far as the South Gate already referred to.

The boundaries thus described were those of the Abbey during the latter portion of its existence. But during the first seventy years St. Laurence’s<sup>2</sup> was only half its present length, and stood immediately *outside* the precincts. In 1196 Abbot Hugh enlarged the church to double its former length, the addition being extended into the precincts of the Abbey, and the church was assigned as an endowment to the new hospitium, which was erected by the same Abbot. As a result, the Abbey precincts henceforth included St. Laurence’s Church.

The walls of the precincts were six feet thick, and covered outside with free-stone, while their interior was filled with flints grouted in cement.

The Abbey wall is said to have been surrounded by a piece of enclosed ground about 50 yards wide, like the pomœrium that surrounded Roman cities. This boundary is particularly noticeable

<sup>1</sup> At the end of the Civil War the land adjacent to this bridge belonged to a man named James Blake.

<sup>2</sup> This is quite distinct from a still earlier church which stood to the north of where the Abbey Church was subsequently erected, and which may have been dedicated to St. Matthew. This earliest church was probably demolished by Henry I., in order to make room for his Abbey (*cf.* Kerry, “History of St. Laurence, Reading,” p. 8).

on the west side, where the line of modern buildings runs about 50 yards from the original wall.

*Gateways.*

Four embattled gateways<sup>1</sup> admitted into these precincts. The principal or Compter Gateway extended across what is now "The 'Forbury'" to near the Blagrave monument in St. Laurence's Church, and through this gateway no doubt entered all the royal and other visitors, who would see before them the great central tower and ornamented west façade of the Abbey Church. Above the Compter Gateway was the Compter Prison.

The North, or River, Gate stood near to the "Rising Sun" in the North Forbury Road, and probably corresponded with what for many years was known as the "Hole in the Wall," caused by the destruction of the gateway during the siege of Reading in 1643.

The East Gate faced Blake's Bridge, while, as already mentioned, the South Gate stood on the north bank of the Holy Brook, close to where is now the Abbey Hall.

Both at the Compter Gate and at the West Gate were porters' lodges. The lodge at the Compter Gate consisted of a cellar, hall, buttery, three chambers, three garrets, a small yard, and a garden with an outhouse, while that at the West Gate contained nearly as much accommodation.

The space included within these boundaries was divided by a wall, extending from the Abbey Church to the Compter Gate, into a larger and more public court known as the Forbury<sup>2</sup>, and into one more strictly reserved for the monks. Access from one court to the other was afforded through what is known as the Inner Gateway, which is still standing, and gives a good idea of what the other gateways must have been.

This Inner Gateway is the best preserved portion of the Abbey,

<sup>1</sup> Although the battlements are shown in old prints, it may be doubted whether they date from the foundation of the Abbey.

<sup>2</sup> By "Forbury" is meant the open space near the town wall, instances of which occur at Reading, and also at Leominster, the priory of which was a cell to Reading. Old French *forsbourg* (*forbourg*), "bourg en dehors de la ville" (Hatzfeld); hence Modern French *faubourg* (cf. "The English Dialect Dictionary").

and forms a beautiful specimen of mediæval architecture in a comparatively complete condition (*cf.* Fig. II.).

Its restoration was carried out in 1861 by the late Sir G. Gilbert Scott, some carvings which had been postponed for want of funds being added in 1900<sup>1</sup>. On the first floor over the archway is a fine hall, in which the Abbot held his manorial court, and sat as judge in his capacity of feudal lord. In the same hall, too, assembled annually the Guild Merchant of Reading, when they presented three of their number to the Abbot, asking him to nominate one to be the *Custos Gilde* or Mayor. And here, lastly, was enacted that mockery of justice, misnamed a trial, when Hugh Faringdon was condemned to a traitor's death.

### The Abbey Church.

The Abbey Church was large and magnificent, as will be seen from the following measurements, taken by Mr. F. W. Albury<sup>2</sup> from the remains and foundations (*cf.* Fig. III.):

			Length (feet).		Breadth (feet).	
Church <sup>3</sup>	...	...	450	...	95	
					(exclusive of	
					transepts)	
Eastern chapel	...	...	75	...	50	
Choir	...	...	90	...	34	
Transepts	...	...	200	...	75	
					(outside)	
Nave ...	...	...	200	...	40	
Central tower	...	...	45	...	45	

Unhappily, so complete has been the work of destruction that little remains beyond portions of the north and south transepts; but even these fragments suffice to show what a splendid fabric the original was.

The Church<sup>4</sup> was cruciform, and belonged to the middle and

<sup>1</sup> Further details will be found in Chapter XI.

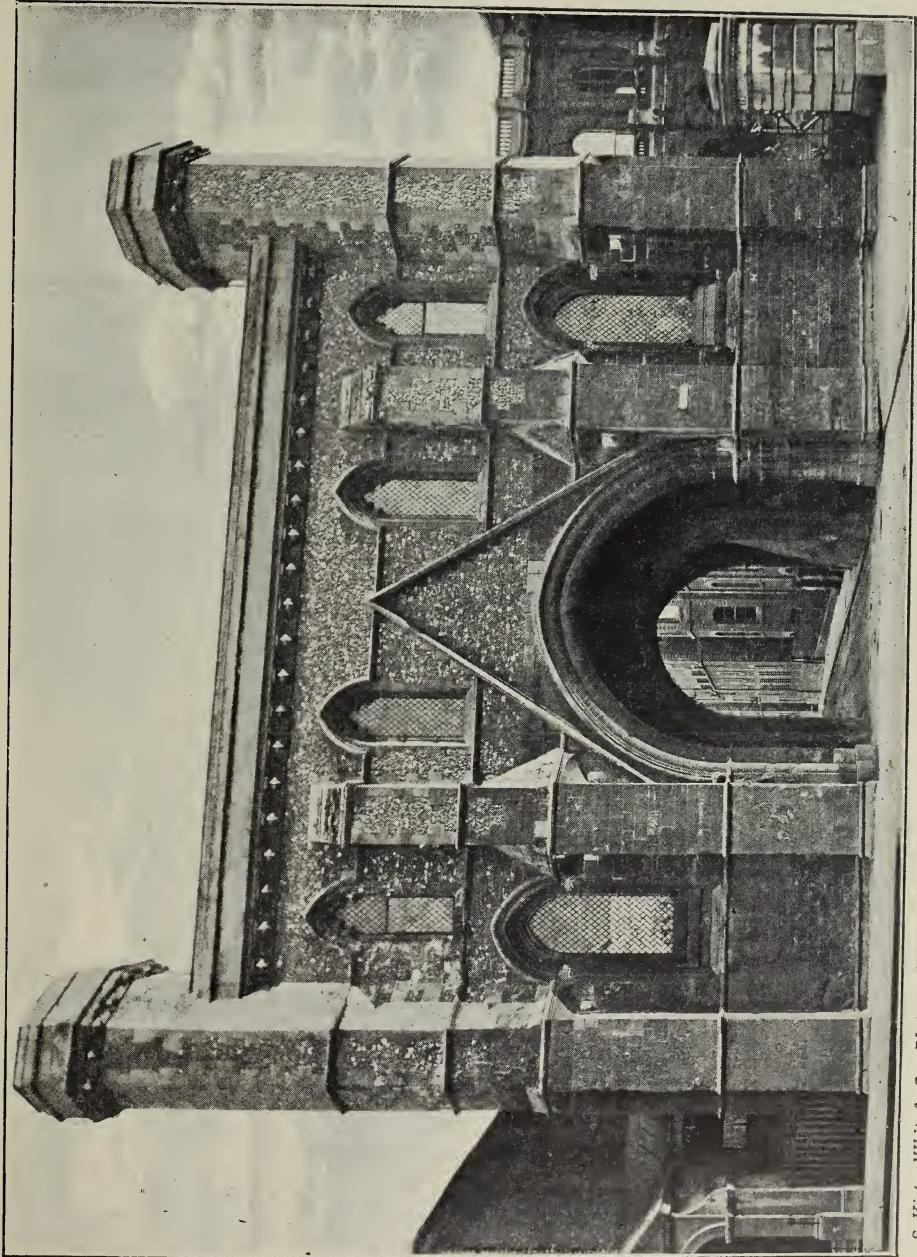
<sup>2</sup> Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society, 1880-1. These are the most recent measurements, but they differ in various details from those given by Englefield (*Archæologia*, Vol. vi.) and by C. A. Buckler ("Notes on Reading Abbey," Add. MSS. No. 36,400, British Museum). According to Buckler, the nave was 2 feet 4 inches wider within the walls than was the choir.

<sup>3</sup> The length of the church was only 50 feet less than St. Paul's Cathedral.

<sup>4</sup> The name of the architect has not come down to posterity; but it is possible

S. Victor White & Co., Photographers.

FIG. II.—The Inner Gateway.





later Norman period of architecture. It consisted of a central nave and two lateral aisles, with two transepts (*cf.* Fig. IV.), each of them divided towards the east into two apsidal chapels<sup>1</sup>. The east end of the Church, forming the head of the cross, terminated with the apse and ambulatory, the latter being formed by the prolongation of the two lateral aisles. The roof of the nave was supported by a series of eight piers on either side, supporting semicircular arches, and doubtless producing on the worshipper entering by the western porch an impression of imposing grandeur. The choir was a long one, being intended to hold the monks during Divine worship, while servants and visitors<sup>2</sup> probably occupied the nave, which was also used on the occasion of national or ecclesiastical processions.

From the intersection of transept and nave sprang the great central tower, the appearance of which may be to some extent inferred from the model of the Church shown in the Abbey Seal of 1328, as well as from the view shown in Speed's map of Reading (1610). According to this evidence, the Church appears to have had a square tower<sup>3</sup>, surmounted by a spire, terminating in a cross. There were also crosses on the east and west fronts.

The entrance-porch was doubtless a deeply recessed semi-circular Norman door-way, in keeping with the vast proportions of the building, and presenting abundance of ornament and moulding.

Even now various specimens of rich Norman carving<sup>4</sup> may be seen amongst the ruins, including the well-known zig-zag and other mouldings.

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that two Cluniac monks—Hézelon, who was the chief architect of the Basilica at Cluny, and Gauzon, his assistant—had some share in designing the Abbey Church at Reading (*cf.* Duckett, "Charters and Records of Cluni," Vol. i., p. 12).

<sup>1</sup> Of these four chapels the innermost one of the south transept, more extensive than the three others, and also of a different shape, may have been dedicated to the Virgin Mary. One of the chapels in the north transept was dedicated to St. Thomas à Becket.

<sup>2</sup> As the Abbey Church was specially the chapel of the monastery, ordinary parishioners would probably attend St. Laurence or one of the other parish churches.

<sup>3</sup> C. A. Buckler, however (*loc. cit.*), suggests that there may have been a lantern instead of a tower.

<sup>4</sup> Some of these are figured by Albury ("Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society," 1880-1).

As regards the interior of the Church, nothing was grudged that could enhance the splendour of its decoration or the beauty of its ritual. Stained glass, gorgeous tapestries, embroideries of the most tasteful design and colour, were all made use of, the walls being probably covered with frescoes<sup>1</sup>.

The vessels used at the High Altar were of pure gold. One chalice alone, with its paten, weighed four pounds, and was worth over £50. Amongst the other treasures was a gold shrine for carrying relics, adorned with sapphires, pearls and other precious stones.

There were also valuable pixes for the sacrament, mitres, gilt crosses, embroidered copes, chasubles and a variety of altar furniture, which will be described in a subsequent Chapter.

The vestry, or treasury<sup>2</sup>, in which were kept the ecclesiastical vestments as well as the ornaments and vessels of the Church, probably occupied the passage or slype between the south transept and the chapter-house, leading out of the cloisters. Above the vestry was an apartment which may have been used as the Registry.

In regard to the altars, tombs and chapels in the Abbey, almost nothing is known, except the fact that the founder, King Henry I., was buried before the High Altar ("in ipsa Ecclesia ante "altare sepultum est"<sup>3</sup>). In the following year his widow, the lovely Adeliza, paid a visit to the grave on the anniversary of the King's death, and offered a rich pall on the altar in memory of her husband.

Some time after a stately monument was erected to his memory, with a life-size effigy of the King, and adorned with the usual emblems of royalty.

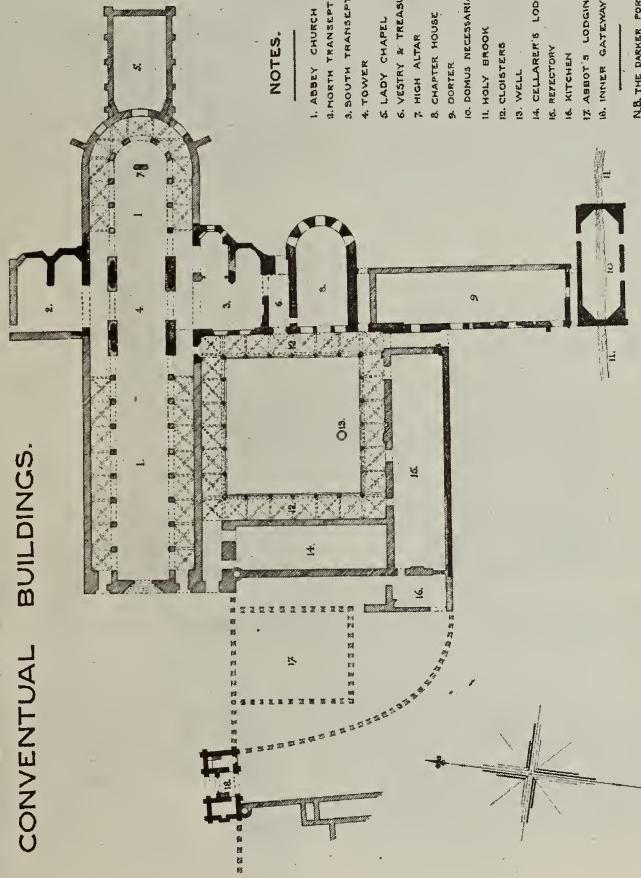
The hallowing of the Abbey Church was performed on April 19, 1164, by Archbishop Thomas à Becket, assisted by ten suffragan bishops. There were also present King Henry II., with many nobles of the realm, and the Abbey was doubtless the scene of a splendid religious ceremony. And although to-day the fire is

<sup>1</sup> "The Churches of the order of Cluny, always in the first rank for grandeur and beauty, were generally ornamented with paintings, probably frescoes" (*cf.* Montalembert, "Monks of the West," Vol. v., p. 183).

<sup>2</sup> In the Middle Ages Vestiarium and Treasury were synonymous terms. Du Cange (*Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis*) defines Vestiarium as "Locus ubi non modo vestes asservantur, sed etiam cimelia, atque adeo thesaurus et pecuniae."

<sup>3</sup> Gervase of Canterbury, "Opera Historica" (Rolls Series), Vol. i., p. 95.

GROUND PLAN  
OF THE  
CONVENTUAL BUILDINGS.



SCALE OF FEET 0 50 100 200

FIG. III.—THE CONVENTUAL BUILDINGS.



extinguished on the altar, and the music is hushed in the choir, and the black-robed monk has vanished, we may still in imagination picture to ourselves the magnificent procession winding along the aisles and passing up the glorious choir, and listen to the voices of thanksgiving and to the prayer of the Archbishop, as he dedicated the fabric to the worship of God for ever and ever.

But even now the Abbey Church was incomplete, and not till 1314, during the abbacy of Nicholas Quappelade, was erected the Eastern or Lady Chapel, which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

As would be expected from its date, the Lady Chapel was probably of more delicate design and construction than the rest of the Abbey Church, with which it communicated by a gap in the apse. Its plan was that of a rectangle<sup>1</sup>, 75 feet long by 50 wide, within the walls.

To-day alas! nothing remains of the old Abbey Church except some sombre ivy-clad ruins. But the story of its destruction must be reserved for another Chapter.

<sup>1</sup> C. A. Buckler (*loc. cit.*).

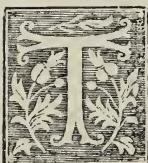




## Chapter ij.

### *The Abbey (Continued).*

Monastic Buildings : Leper-House : Hospitium of St. John : Infirmary : Etc.



THE Monastic Buildings comprised the Chapter-house, Cloisters, Cellarer's Lodging, Refectory, Abbot's Lodging, Dormitory with the adjacent Domus Necesariae (Rere Dorter), the Common Room, and others of less importance.

#### *The Chapter-House.*

The Chapter-house (*capitulum*) was situated to the east of the Cloisters, and, although stripped of its finished mason-work, remains to this day a noble monument of its ancient magnificence (*cf.* Figs. V., VI.). It measured  $79 \times 42$  feet<sup>1</sup>, and was vaulted from wall to wall, the ceiling springing from eight pilasters, each 20 feet high. The total height of the hall was about 40 feet. A large entrance-door, with windows above and on either side of it, led from the Cloisters into the Chapter-house<sup>2</sup>, while at the opposite end were five large windows. The remains of the stone

<sup>1</sup> Englefield, *Archæologia*, Vol. vi., p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> C. A. Buckler believes that at the entrance from the Cloisters was an arched and cross-grained vestibule, projecting for about 13 feet into the Chapter-house, and adding to its privacy (*cf.* "Notes on Reading Abbey," Add. MSS. 36,400, British Museum).



S. Victor White & Co., Photographers.

FIG. IV.—THE SOUTH Transept of the Abbey Church.



benches on which sat the monks, may still be seen along either side, while at the east end were seats for the Abbot, Prior and Sub-Prior<sup>1</sup>. Doubtless the windows were filled with stained glass and the walls painted with frescoes, but no vestige of these remains.

This Chapter-house was one of the largest and finest in England, and within its walls were held the Parliaments, Ecclesiastical Councils, and other important meetings mentioned in connection with the history of the Abbey.

The Chapter formed an important event in the daily routine of the monastery. All the monks were obliged to attend, the Abbot presiding. First was read the martyrology of the day, after which notices were given out, and the *tabula*, or list of duties, announced. When the Abbot thought well, a suitable discourse was made, and any needful punishments would be administered, preceded, as occasion required, by confession.

On the south side of the Chapter-house was a passage leading to the monks' Cemetery, and possibly also giving access to the Common Room and to the monastic offices situated beneath the Dormitory.

#### *The Cloisters.*

The Cloisters, or great quadrangle (*claustrum*), consisted of a covered ambulatory, with open arches looking into a grass court or garth, with a well in it, and measured about 145 feet square. Placed on the south side of the nave of the Church, they allowed of all the sunshine possible, and also insured protection against the cold winds of winter. Moreover the Cloisters afforded sheltered communication between the adjacent buildings, and in it the monks spent much of their time, during the intervals between the services of the Church.

In the northern Cloister may have been located the Library containing the manuscripts, which will be described in a subsequent Chapter, and the Scriptorium where the monks studied, illuminated, and wrote or transcribed chronicles. The eastern Cloister (*cf.* Fig. VII.) communicated with the Vestry, Chapter-house and Dormitory, and opened at its northern end into the Church by a door of unusual size. At the opposite end was another door.

<sup>1</sup> Walcott suggests that the apsidal termination may have served the purpose of a chapel (*cf.* "Church and Conventual Arrangement," p. 123).

The south Cloister adjoined the Refectory, and contained until recent times two stone cupboards, with a lavatory between them. The west Cloister probably bounded the Cellarer's Lodging. In these Cloisters<sup>1</sup> was held the school for novices. Here, too, the monks were shaved once a fortnight in summer, and once every three weeks in winter, the whole head being shaved except a ring or crown of hair. Each section of the monastic community had its allotted place, and definite rules were enforced for the maintenance of order.

#### *The Cellarium.*

The Cellarium, or Cellarer's Lodging, was usually situated on the west side of the Cloisters, and is therefore supposed to have occupied that position at Reading, although direct evidence is wanting. Below his Lodging would probably be placed cellars and store-rooms, in which were kept the provisions for the confraternity. The Cellarer was one of the principal officers of the convent, and had charge of the commissariat for the brethren as well as for the guests. According to the Rule, he was to be "a God-fearing man, "who may be like a father to the whole community<sup>2</sup>."

#### *The Refectory.*

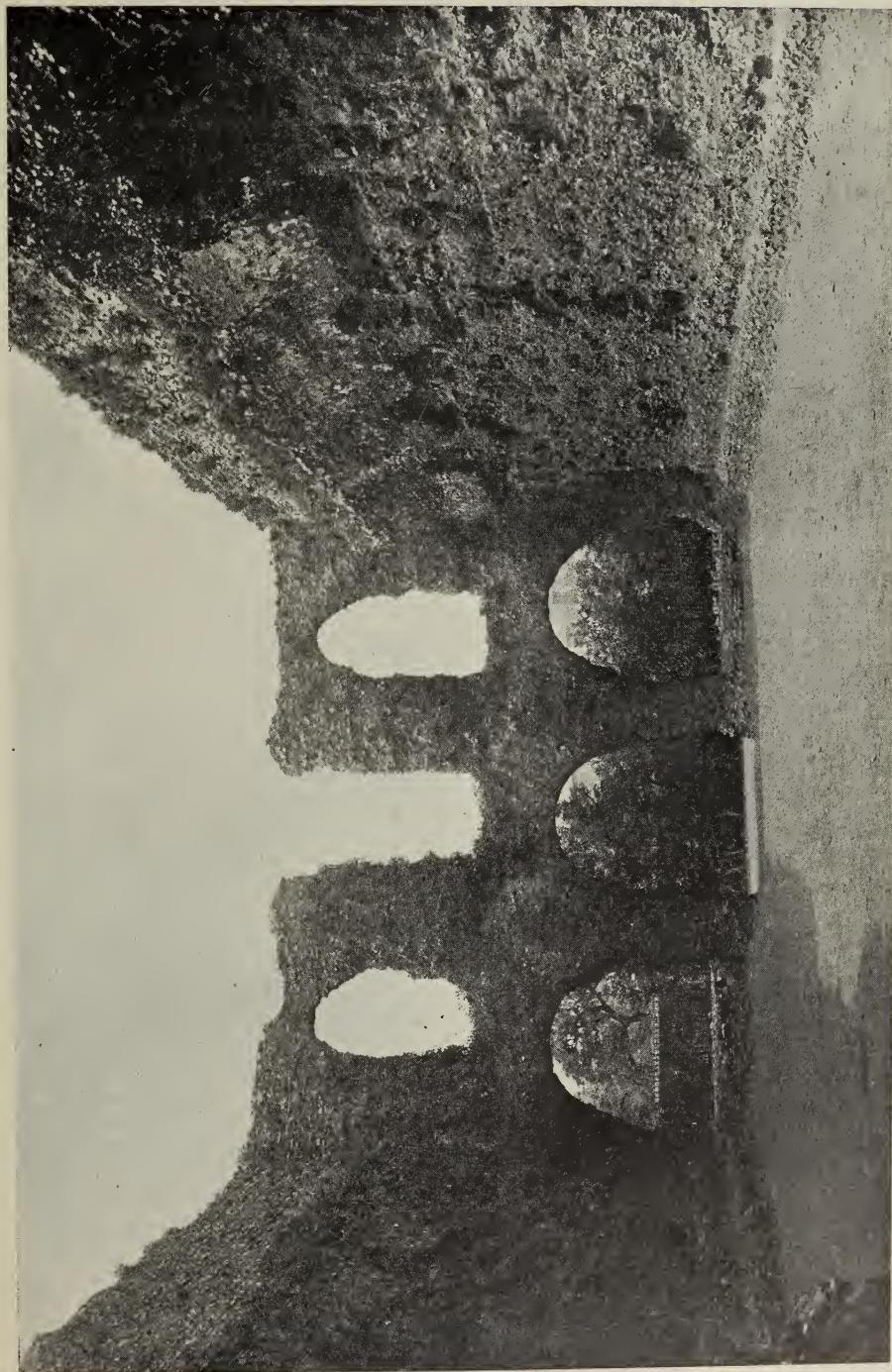
The Refectory, or Dining-hall (*frater*), was placed on the south side of the Cloisters, in order that the smell and noise of meals might not interfere with the services of the Church. "That this was the Refectory may be conjectured still further, from "the appearance of the Cloister wall, which has two neat stone "cupboards wrought in it, and between them a rough foundation, "probably of the lavatory to which the cupboards belonged, for "the reception of the necessary towels"<sup>3</sup>". Such a lavatory is always found in monastic refectories, it being the habit of the monks to wash before and after meals.

According to Albury, the Refectory measured 167 feet in length by 38 feet in width, and Sir Henry Englefield, who surveyed the Abbey in 1779, describes it as ornamented with a row of interesting arches. Beneath the Refectory was probably cellarage.

<sup>1</sup> These details are inferred from similar arrangements in other abbeys, as there is no special information in regard to Reading.

<sup>2</sup> "Regula S. Patris Benedicti," Caput xxxi.

<sup>3</sup> Sir H. Englefield, *Archæologia*, Vol. vi., p. 64.



S. Victor White & Co., Photographers.

FIG. V.—The Chapter-House (looking West).



To the Refectory-master belonged the duty of preparing the tables for meals, the same officer being responsible for the table linen, for supplying towels to the lavatory at the Refectory door, and for many other details, while the actual preparation of food was left to the Cook. The waiting at table was done by the monks in weekly rotation.

At the west end of the Refectory was situated the kitchen and buttery, where the pantler kept the bread and napery.

*The Abbot's Lodging.*

There is some doubt as to the position of the Abbot's Lodging. Mr. F. W. Albury<sup>1</sup>, who has paid much attention to the topography of the Abbey, believes that it was placed on the west side of the Cellarer's Lodging, and not far from the Inner Gateway. This view is based on the description of the ruins in the Parliamentary Survey made in May 1650, where mention is made of "two sellars, two "buttries, a hall, a parlour, a dineing-roome, tenne chambers, a "garret, with a large gallery, and other small roomes, with two court- "yards and a large gate-house, with several rooms adjoining the said "house." Moreover, some old foundations were discovered, when the house next to the Gateway was built, and old prints exist showing ruins in this position. The Abbot's Lodging, sometimes called the Palace, was certainly a stately edifice, suited to a dignitary who was a peer of the realm and frequently entertained the Sovereign during his progress through the land. The Abbot also maintained an extensive retinue of servants, for whom, as well as for his guests, ample accommodation was required.

*The Dormitory.*

The Dormitory, or Dوتر (cf. Fig. VIII.), probably occupied the long building running south from the Chapter-house<sup>2</sup>. It measured about 150 feet in length, and was raised on a sub-structure of low vaults, which were most likely appropriated to the Common Room and other monastic offices.

<sup>1</sup> "Transactions of the Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society," 1880-1.

<sup>2</sup> A similar relation of Dormitory to Chapter-house existed at Canterbury (cf. Willis, "Conventual Buildings of the Monastery of Christ Church in Canterbury," Plan I.).

Here on the first floor was sleeping accommodation for 200 monks, and, if the arrangements at Durham may be taken as a guide, "every monncke had a litle chamber of wainscott, verie close, severall by themselves, and ther wyndowes towardes the Cloyster, every wyndowe servinge for one Chambre, by reasonne the particion betwixt every chamber was close wainscotted one from another, and in every of there wyndowes a deske to supporte there booke for there studdie<sup>1</sup>."

The Dorter was reached by means of a door (now built up) leading out of the cloister, and by an inside staircase, of which some traces remain.

On entering the Dormitory, each monk said privately the compline of Our Lady, after which he prepared his bed for the night, took off his upper garment, and got into bed<sup>2</sup>. This consisted of a straw mattress, blanket, coverlet and pillow. Hay or rushes were strewn along the floor, while a mat probably stretched the whole length of the room. Strict silence was always observed, and a light burnt all night long<sup>3</sup>.

In going from the Dormitory to the Church each night for matins<sup>4</sup>, the monks descended the above-mentioned staircase, and passed through the east Cloister. They would therefore be under cover all the way.

#### *Domus Necessariæ<sup>5</sup>.*

At the south end of the Dormitory were the Domus Necessariæ (Latrines or Rere Dorter), approached by a bridge with a span of

<sup>1</sup> "Rites of Durham" (Surtees Society), p. 72.

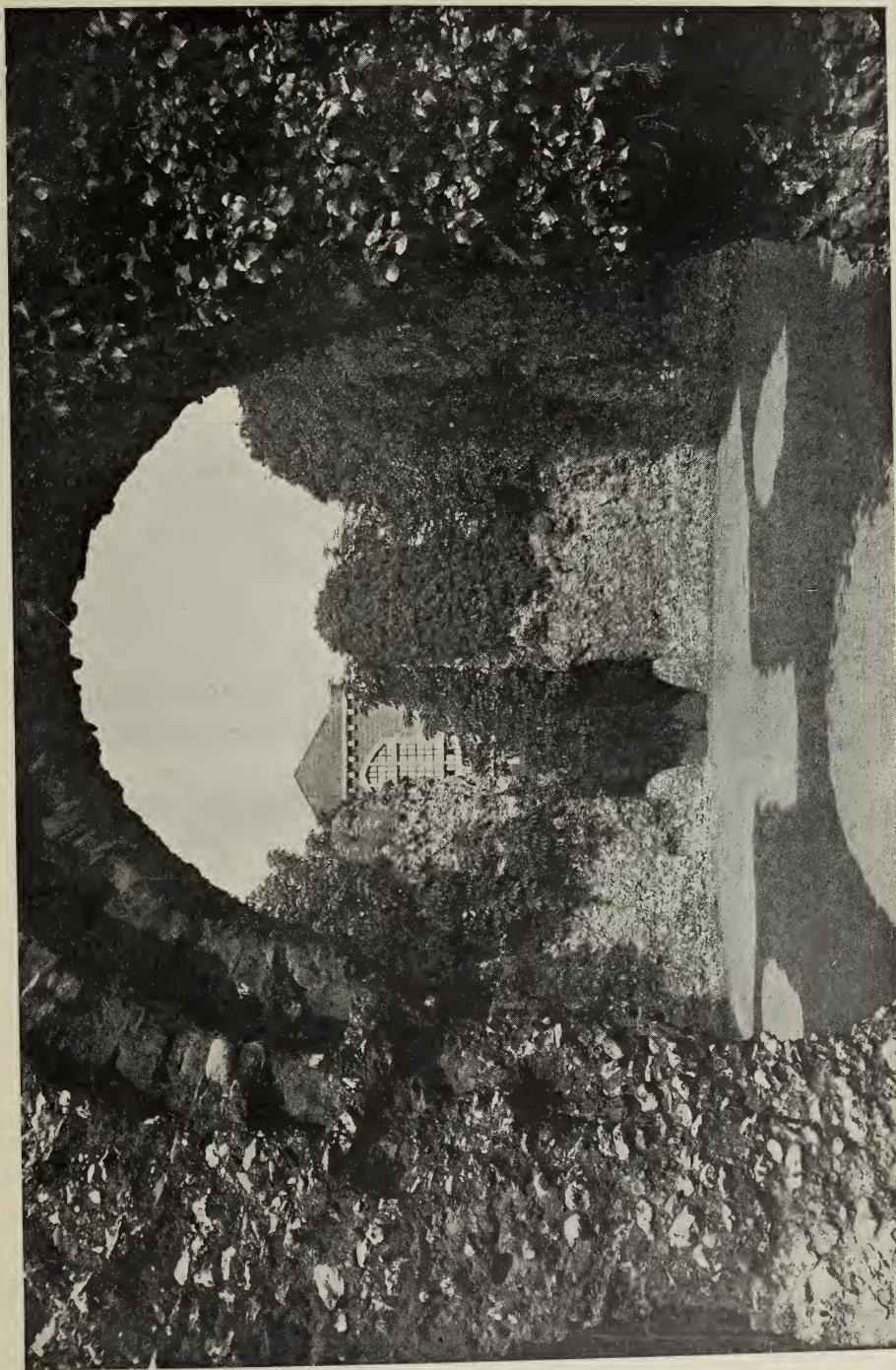
<sup>2</sup> "Vestiti dormiant, et cincti cingulis aut funibus," Regula, Caput xxii.

<sup>3</sup> "A l'église, au dortoir, au réfectoire, à la cuisine, la règle commandait un silence si absolu que les moines s'étaient habitués, dans les occasions nécessaires, à s'entendre par signes, comme nos sourds-muets" (Lorain, "Essai historique sur l'Abbaye de Cluny," p. 71).

<sup>4</sup> In most monasteries there was direct communication between the Dorter and the Church, enabling the monks to go to matins, without descending into the Cloister. Such an arrangement, however, is not universal, since at Gloucester and at Reading, both of them large abbeys, the monks had to pass through the Cloister in order to reach the church (*cf.* W. H. St. John Hope, "Records of Gloucester Cathedral," 1897).

<sup>5</sup> Similarly placed Domus Necessariæ at the Cluniac Priory of St. Pancras at Lewes are described by Hope, *Archæological Journal*, Vol. xli., p. 22 (*cf.* also "Rites of Durham," Surtees Society, p. 72).

FIG. VI.—THE CHAPTER-HOUSE (LOOKING EAST).





about five feet. This building was of considerable size, and, like all such departments in monasteries, was constructed with great care, much importance being attached to cleanliness. Doubtless a branch of the Holy Brook ran beneath these Latrines, and served as the main drain<sup>1</sup> of the Abbey.

*Common Room.*

The Common Room or Parlour (*calefactorium*), was, as usual in Benedictine monasteries, located beneath the Dormitory. Here in winter a fire was kept burning for the monks to warm themselves. Here, too, they traded with merchants, conversed with friends, or gave directions to servants.

*The Leper-house.*

The Leper-house, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene<sup>2</sup>, was built by Abbot Aucherius in 1134, not far from the Inner Gateway<sup>3</sup>, its foundations being dug out when the present Assize Courts were erected. The length of the Leper-house was 110 feet, its width 50 feet, the largest apartment being about 60 feet by 45. These dimensions would accommodate a considerable number of inmates<sup>4</sup>, who wore a special costume, with a hood drawn over the face, and carried a wooden clapper to give warning of their approach. They were forbidden to enter the Church, the Mill, or the Bakehouse, to touch healthy persons, or even eat with them. But no doubt they would beg at the Compter Gate, and wander round the Hospitium of St. John, especially when many visitors were there. Each leper was to have half a loaf of bread and half a gallon of ale daily,

<sup>1</sup> The course of the other drains is not known.

<sup>2</sup> There were at least thirty leper-houses in England and Wales called after St. Mary Magdalene ("Prize Essays on Leprosy," New Sydenham Society, 1895, p. 137).

<sup>3</sup> Lysons ("Magna Britannia," Vol. i., p. 348) and Coates ("History of Reading," p. 278) speak of a hospital founded by Hugh, who became Abbot in 1180, for the constant support of thirteen poor persons, and for the occasional reception of thirteen other poor sick persons, particularly lepers, belonging to the town, and of strangers who passed that way. From this it would appear that the Residence House for thirteen sisters and brethren connected with the Hospitium of St. John, and described later on, was also occasionally used for lepers.

<sup>4</sup> In addition to lepers, these inmates included persons suffering from lupus, cancer and other diseases which formerly were confused with leprosy.

fivepence every month for meat, three ells of white or black russet for their habit, and half an ell for hose. The chaplain was to have six ells, besides other articles of clothing, or in lieu ten shillings.

The barber was allowed twopence every month, the laundress a barley-loaf daily and two shillings a year. For incontinence or striking a brother the punishment was expulsion; for defamation the offender was to fast on bread and water, sitting in the middle of the hall, his portion of meat and drink being distributed meanwhile among his brethren. If he continued obdurate after three repetitions of this punishment, he was to be expelled.

To this Leper-house belonged the rent of a house at one of the Erleys, probably Erley-Whiteknights<sup>1</sup>, as well as a heriot when any became due. It also owned two acres of land in Spittlefield, the gift of one of the Abbots.

Leper-houses were so common in England between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries, that this interval has been called the leper-house period<sup>2</sup>. Not that leprosy was necessarily a new or increasing disease, but probably humanitarian ideas were awaking, and aroused a desire to check the spread of the disease. Leper-houses at that time were more ecclesiastical than medical institutions, refuges rather than places for treatment, the inmates being shunned by the monks, although not efficiently isolated. Indeed, efficient isolation was not attempted.

Leprosy began to decline in England towards the end of the fourteenth century, and the Leper-house at Reading was closed in 1413, "because no lepers are forthcoming."

### *The Hospitium of St. John the Baptist.*

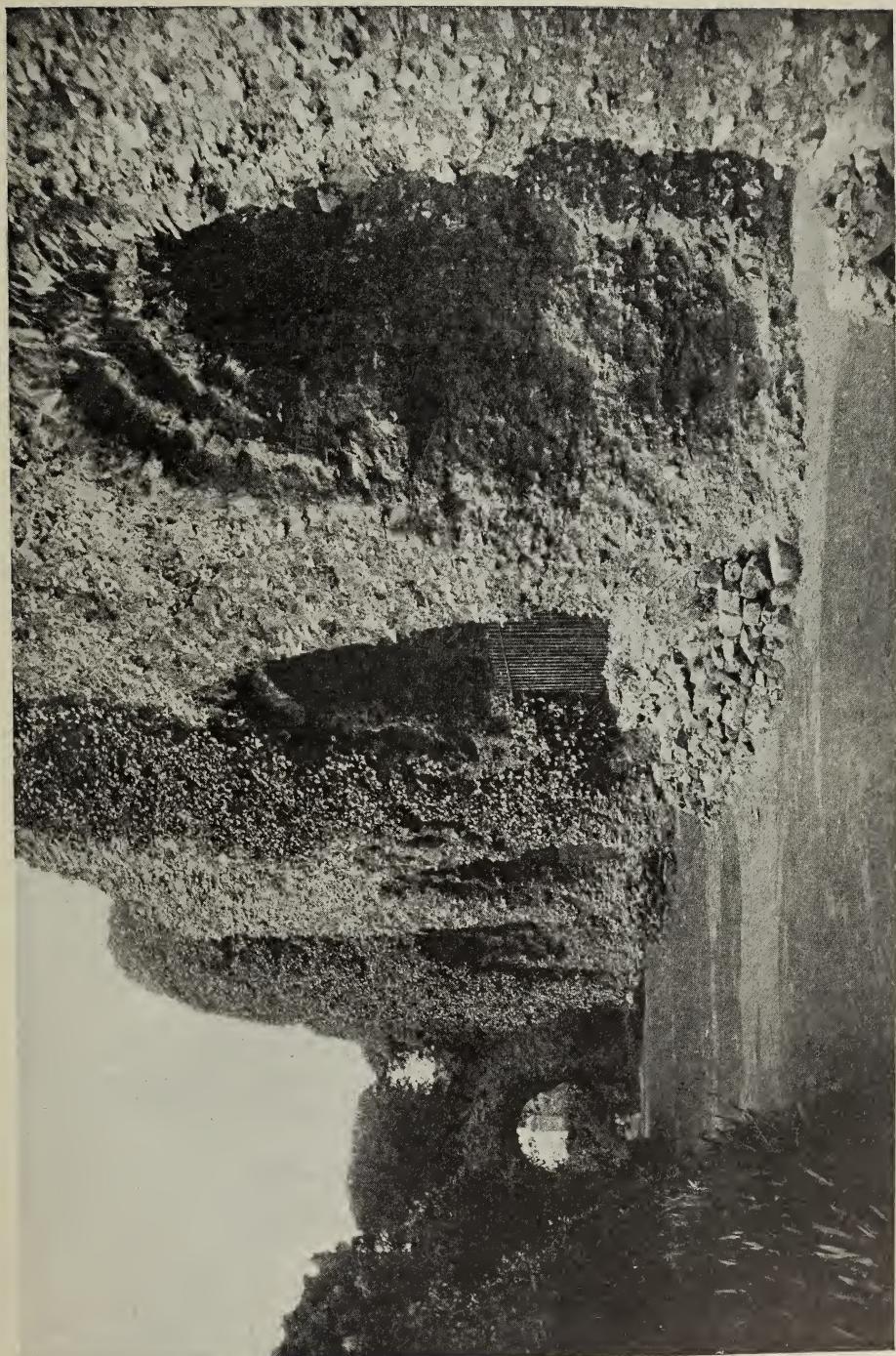
A Hospitium, or Guest-house, with an Almonry, was almost as necessary for the completeness of a great monastery as was its Church. Not only was the exercise of hospitality and charity one of the principal monastic ordinances, but the Foundation Charter of Reading Abbey expressly enjoins that "Whoever shall . . . be 'made Abbot shall not bestow the alms of the monastery on his 'lay kindred or other persons, but use them for the entertainment

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Quarterly Journal Berks Archaeological Society*, Vol. iii., pp. 110, 131, 180.

<sup>2</sup> "Prize Essays on Leprosy," New Sydenham Society, 1895, p. 6; Creighton, "History of Epidemics in Britain," Vol. i., p. 86.

FIG. VII.—Ruins of the East Cloister.

S. Victor White & Co., Photographers.





“of the poor and strangers.” Hence the need for a Hospitium which was open to all comers, whether King or monk, pilgrim or pauper. On the authority of William of Malmesbury<sup>1</sup> we know that the monks at Reading in his day set an example of unwearied hospitality. They might literally be described as *τὴν φιλοξενίαν διώκοντες*.

The Hospitium was, as usual, placed at a considerable distance from the strictly monastic buildings, in order that the ordinary avocations of the monks might not be disturbed. On the other hand, it was near the roadside, so as to be convenient of access to guests and wayfarers, who, according to William of Malmesbury, kept arriving every hour, and consumed even more than the inmates themselves.

The usual custom was for visitors to be received by the hosteler, or hospitaller, who gave them the kiss of peace. They were allowed to remain two days and two nights, and on the third day after dinner were expected to depart. If, however, a guest could not conveniently depart so soon, he might obtain leave of the Abbot to prolong his stay.

The site of the original Guest-house<sup>2</sup>, erected by Henry I. with the other Abbey buildings in 1121, was probably the portion of ground adjacent to St. Laurence’s Church, and now occupied by Mr. W. F. Blandy’s house and by the old Town Hall. At that early date, when Reading comprised only a few houses, and trade with the Western Counties was unimportant, the original Hospitium was of comparatively small extent. The town, however, grew rapidly in size after the foundation of the monastery, and the concourse of travellers and guests became so great as to tax severely the resources of the monks, who might well feel alarmed, when a motley crowd of pilgrims or travellers, such as Chaucer describes in the “Canterbury Tales”, knocked at the gate, requesting food and entertainment for two days. In fact, the dimensions of the original guest-house were no longer sufficient to meet the demands made upon it.

And so it came to pass that when Hugh II. became Abbot, he found that, although Henry I. had desired in the Foundation

<sup>1</sup> “Gesta Pontificum” (Rolls Series), p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Further particulars will be found in a paper by Guilding (*cf.* Reading Literary and Scientific Society, 1892, p. 17).

Charter that the Abbey was to be "for the entertainment of the 'poor and strangers,'" the rich alone were sure of a welcome at the Abbey Gate. The poor wayfarer and solitary pilgrim, on the other hand, if not actually repelled, too often met with a treatment that was equally repugnant to Christian charity and to the pious wishes of the royal founder.

In order to remedy this state of things, Abbot Hugh, between the years 1189 and 1193<sup>1</sup>, built a hospital, called the Hospitium of St. John, or St. John's House, without the Compter Gate, so that such as had hitherto not been admitted might now be entertained (*cf. Plan of Abbey*).

Twenty-six poor persons were to constantly reside in this hospital. Thirteen of either sex were provided for out of the revenues of St. Laurence's Church, which, with the consent of Hubert Walter<sup>2</sup>, Bishop of the diocese (then Salisbury), were annexed by the Abbey to the Hospital as an endowment. Thirteen others, who were all to be men, were to be supplied with all necessaries out of the alms daily distributed by the Abbey. Lastly, needy travellers, for whose use the Hospital was primarily designed, were to be maintained out of the profits of a mill at Leominster, which were set apart for the purpose by the Abbey.

The Hospital probably consisted of a series of halls and chambers, devoted to the exercise of hospitality and the entertainment of guests, together with an eleemosynary department for the relief of the poor. The three principal divisions were :

(a) *The Residence-house for Twenty-six Poor Brothers and Sisters.*

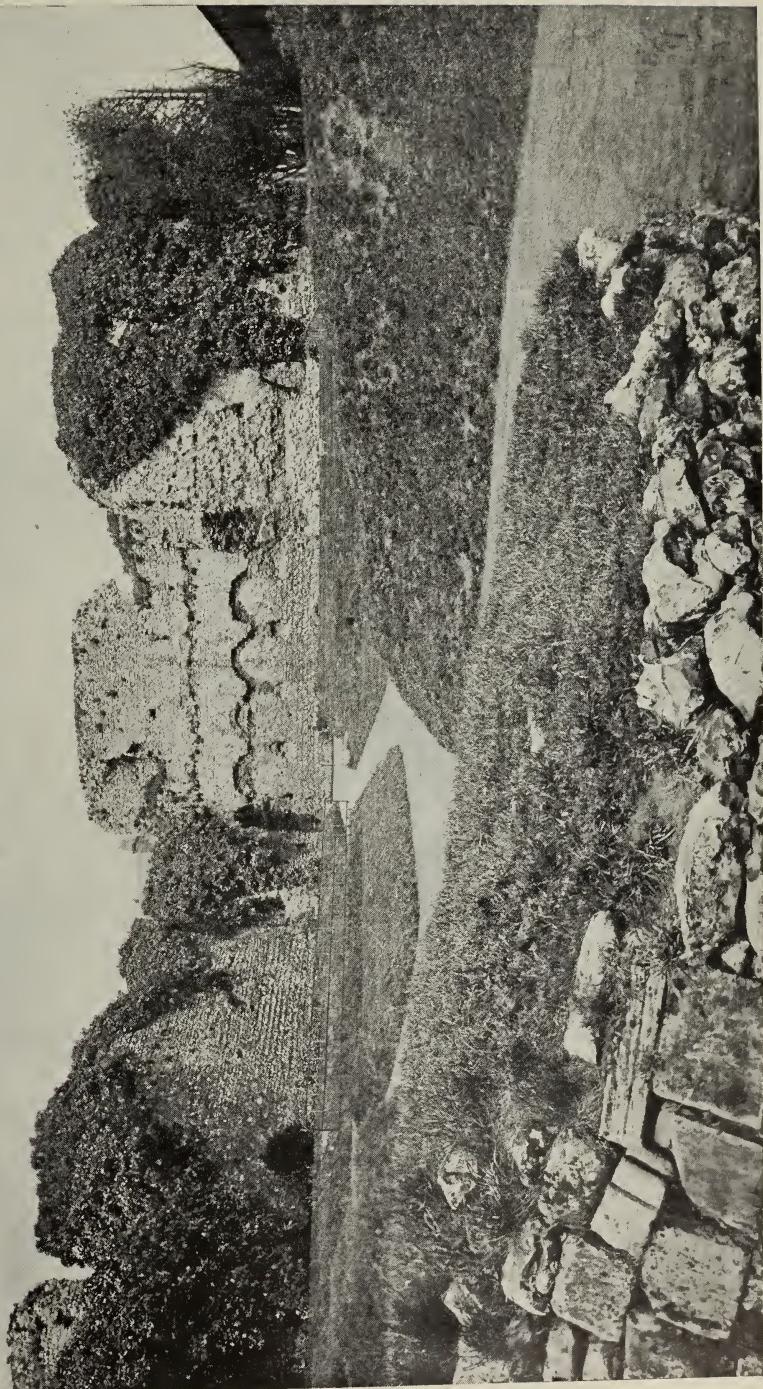
This Residence-house was connected with the Church of St. Laurence by a wooden cloister, which gave the inmates access by a private door to the aisle which led to their Chapel of St. John in the north chancel. The poor sisters were such as had been the wives of persons who had borne some office in the town, and had

<sup>1</sup> Bruce, "Archbishop Laud's Benefactions to Berkshire," 1841, p. 2. There will also be found the Charter of endowment of the Hospital, and other documents relating to it.

<sup>2</sup> In "Sarum Charters and Documents" (Rolls Series), p. 46, is recorded an agreement entered into by Abbot Hugh to feed and clothe thirteen poor people, in commemoration of Hubert, Bishop of Sarum.

FIG. VIII.—*The Dormitory.*

S. Victor White & Co., Photographers.





fallen into poverty, and in their widowhood took the veil and made a vow of living unmarried for the remainder of their lives. The names and allowances of several of these sisters are recorded. Thus Margery York had four of the founder's loaves and three chopines or penny loaves. Matilda, a sister who entered the Hospital on the day of St. Calixtus, in the third year of Richard II. (May 10, 1379), received the same allowance. Another sister, Johanna Grome, admitted in the forty-ninth year of Edward III. (1375), had every day a loaf called "pricked loff," probably a better kind of bread, and a pottle, or two quarts, of ale.

Each sister had an allowance of one farthing for meat, on the days when it was permitted to be eaten. But on Easter-day, Pentecost, All Saints' Day, the Nativity of our Lord and Shrove Tuesday, the allowance was one penny or a dish of meat from the Abbey. At Easter and Christmas one halfpenny was paid to each sister, and to the Prioress a penny.

Each sister received two shillings and sixpence for clothing, and in the case of death the Almoner had the disposal of her effects, a halfpenny or farthing being allowed to each of the survivors to pray for the soul of the deceased, and to the Prioress a penny. Four-pence was allowed yearly for the lamp in the great hall, and the maid-servant of the sisters received weekly seven loaves of the quality called *miches*.

The brethren of the house<sup>1</sup> were to receive such an allowance as should be agreed upon with the Almoner. In the ninth year of Edward III.—i.e. 1336—one of the brethren received weekly seven chopines, and three of black wheat ("blakwyth"); and half a mess of meat every day; three ells and a half of russet cloth for his habit; and twelve pence for shoes, and for the service which he performed, in his turn, at the Almonry. A brother or sister convicted of incontinence was to be expelled for ever.

In the Chartulary of Reading Abbey, preserved in the British Museum (Cottonian MSS., Vesp. E. 5), is set forth the "Modus"<sup>2</sup> "recipiendi fratres vel sorores in Hospitio Sancti Johannis," the ceremony in the case of a brother consisting in the recitation

<sup>1</sup> The addition of thirteen brethren seems to have been made at a later date (*cf.* Lysons, "Magna Britannia," Vol. i., p. 349).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Bruce "Benefactions of William Laud" (1841), pp. 3, 56, where further details will be found.

of several prayers before the altar, while the candidate was kneeling there. In the case of a sister, after a prayer for the forgiveness of her sins, the candidate was sprinkled with holy water, the veil and chlamys, or mantle, being consecrated in the same manner. The Divine blessing was then invoked on the habit which the newly-admitted sister received, as a sign of the vow of chastity. The veil was next put on with a suitable prayer, and afterwards the hood and mantle. The new sister then received the kiss of charity from those present, the ceremony ending with a discourse upon the advantages of the institution and the regulations of the Order.

The Residence-house was thus practically an almshouse, and more or less distinct from the other two portions of the Hospitium ; but doubtless the inmates were under the control of the Almoner, the brothers and sisters attending in turn on the pilgrims and visitors to the Hospitium.

In course of time this foundation was diverted from the intentions of Abbot Hugh. By the middle of the fifteenth century the brothers had disappeared, the house being occupied by "certeyn<sup>1</sup> relygyous women, wydowes in chast lyvyngg in Godds "servyce, praying nizt and day for the Kyng's estate, and for the "sawles of ther founders and benefactors." These widows, formerly the wives of decayed townsmen of good repute, retained their chapel in St. Laurence's Church where they resorted "to sey ther "prayors in certain seasons of the day and nizt, and wher also "massys were seyd many tymes in the yere, and other devyne "servyce also." But the revenues of the Church and the profits of the Mill were lost, the inmates of the house receiving from the Abbey "every weke, certeyne of bred and ale, and also money ; "and as yt ys seyd, oons in the yere, a certeyne clothynge."

#### (b) *The Hospitium Refectory.*

The second division of the Hospitium was the Refectory or Guest-hall. This was of noble dimensions, measuring at least 120 feet in length by 20 to 30 feet in width, and had a row of pillars, supporting pointed arches, down the centre. It occupied the area now covered by the old Town Hall.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bruce (*loc. cit.*), pp. 4, 60.

(c) *The Hospitium Dormitory.*

The third division was the Dormitory, running at right angles to the Refectory. It measured 200 feet in length, and is the only department of the Hospitium of which any portion has survived.

The principal entrance to the Hospitium was probably by a postern-gate in Vastern Lane, and by the North, or River, Gate of the Abbey. The entrance to the Dormitory was on its north side, where there was a large open space where goods and carts might be left.

The Hospitium erected by Abbot Hugh apparently underwent no important change until about the middle of the fifteenth century, when, in 1438, during the episcopate of William Ayscough, the nave of St. Laurence's Church was altered, the tower reconstructed, and the Hospitium rebuilt. From that time its management was altered, and by the year 1480 the Hospitium had apparently been suppressed. During a visit paid in that year by King Edward IV. to Reading a Memorial was presented by the burgesses, stating that the charitable work of the Abbey had ceased, that the twenty-six brethren and sisters were no longer maintained, and that the Abbot diverted to other purposes the alms that should have been given to the poor. Moreover, the proposed Grammar School, which the Abbot had promised to the town as a substitute for the Hospitium, showed no sign of being realized. The King referred the matter to Richard Beauchamp, Bishop of Salisbury, who promised to set it right; but the Bishop died in the following year, and nothing was done until 1485, when the Refectory and the Residence-house were converted by Abbot Thorne into the Grammar School with the concurrence of the King, who endowed it with an annual stipend of ten pounds. Leland<sup>1</sup> states that "One, Wylliam Dene, a riche man and servant in thabbay of "Reading, gave 200 Markes in Mony toward the avauncement "of this Schole: as it apperith by the Epitaphie on his Grave in "the Abbay Chirch of Reading."

In the following year the Grammar School received the name of "Royal Grammar School of King Henry VII."

<sup>1</sup> "Itinerary," Vol. ii., fol. 4.

The Dormitory, however, continued to be used for the reception of mendicants and wayfarers of the poorer class down to 1539, when the Abbey was dissolved.

### *The Infirmary.*

The Infirmary (*farmery, domus infirmorum*) formed an extensive and important part of the Abbey, if similar institutions at St. Gall, at Canterbury<sup>1</sup> and elsewhere, may be regarded as types. But of that at Reading almost nothing is known. Even its exact position is doubtful, although tradition points to the site now occupied by the Reading Gaol, which at one time was known as the "Fernary Garden," and where some ancient foundations, shown on the accompanying Plan of the Abbey, were dug out during Colonel Isaacson's tenure of office as governor.

Such buildings, usually placed well apart from the rest of the establishment, so that noises might not disturb the sick, contained a series of rooms such as a dormitory, refectory, kitchen, chapel, warm room (*pyrale*) and hall. There would also be a separate room for monks who had been bled<sup>2</sup> or purged, and a room for the doctor, unless the latter had a separate house allotted to him.

St. Benedict<sup>3</sup> laid special stress on the importance of caring for the sick brethren. "Infirmorum cura ante omnia et super omnia adhibenda est, ut sicut revera Christo, ita eis serviatur."

Not only would be tended here any monks who were ill<sup>4</sup>, but also the *semipectae*, or monks who had been professed for fifty years, and who, by reason of age, were unable any longer to follow the strict Rule of the Order. The Infirmarian, or officer in charge, said daily mass for those able for it, and provided all needful attendance.

Situated near at hand would probably be a physic garden, in which herbs for concoctions and infusions would be grown. The physician was not necessarily a monk, but might be a "layman

<sup>1</sup> A good description of a monastic infirmary will be found in Willis' "Architectural History of the Monastery of Christ Church in Canterbury," p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, however, thinks that the Common-room, or Calefactorium, was in a Cluniac house used for bleeding (*Archæological Journal*, Vol. xli.).

<sup>3</sup> "Regula," Caput xxxvi.

<sup>4</sup> Any pilgrims or travellers who were sick would probably be tended in the Hospitium of St. John.

“cunning in leechery,” and by him was carried out the venesection<sup>1</sup> which was so greatly in vogue both for the prevention, and the cure, of ailments, and sometimes sought after by the monks for the sake of the *solatium* allowed at those times.

“The Cluniacs<sup>2</sup>, like the Benedictines, were not bled at any “stated season; but apparently any brother might submit to the “operation when he felt inclined to do so. He got his bleeding-“license at the close of Chapter, and then gave notice to the “Cellarer, who desired the servant specially appointed for the “purpose to be in readiness after the Gospel at High Mass. On “leaving Church the patient went first into the kitchen, where he “bared his arm and warmed it, and then, attended by the above-“mentioned servant, into the place where the bleeding took place.”

When a brother appeared to be dying in the Infirmary, the whole convent gathered in the Church, and then went to visit and anoint him, after which he received the Sacrament.

Little is known of any epidemics or special illnesses in connection with this Infirmary. But there is still extant a Petition<sup>3</sup> to the Pope, dated 1355, in which the Abbot and Convent of Reading, who, “by reason of the recent epidemic,” had lost many of the monks, pray for a faculty to have thirty monks in their twentieth year ordained Priests by any Catholic Bishop, for the service of their monastery and places subject to it.

The prayer was granted Feb. 7th, 1355.

*The Mill.*

The Mill was situated on the stream known as the Holy Brook,

<sup>1</sup> In 1215 ecclesiastics were debarred by an ordinance of Pope Innocent III. from undertaking any operation involving the shedding of blood, on the plea that the Church “abhorret a sanguine,” and in 1216 Henry III. forbade the clergy or monks from practising as physicians (*cf.* South, “Craft of Surgery,” pp. 8, 12).

<sup>2</sup> Clark, “The Augustinian Priory of Barnwell,” p. lxvi (*cf.* also “Antiquiores Consuetudines Cluniacensis Monasterii” in D’Achery’s “Spicilegium,” Vol. i., p. 673).

<sup>3</sup> “Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland—Petitions to the Pope,” Vol. i., p. 282. The epidemic alluded to was probably the bubonic plague, or Black Death, which appeared in England in 1348, and lasted for five or six years in various parts of the country. In London alone over 20,000 persons died of the disease, and the monastic Orders suffered severely (*cf.* Creighton, “History of Epidemics in Britain,” Vol. i., p. 114).

and at some distance south of the Cloisters. Most of the present structure is modern, but at least one of the original arches, ornamented with dog-tooth moulding, may be seen stretching athwart the mill-race. Some of the old stone-work bears the date 1177, which may indicate the year in which that part of the mill was erected. The Mill would, doubtless, be under the management of the Cellarer and Corn-master, and to it the inhabitants of Reading and the countryside would bring their wheat, paying something to the Abbot for the privilege of having it ground.

Close to the Mill, and, therefore, conveniently situated, was

### *The Bakehouse,*

the foundations of which were discovered in 1860, when new buildings were erected in connection with the Abbey Mill. A large oven, too, was discovered measuring about 4 feet square, and opening towards the Mill, *i.e.* away from Abbey Square.

For such an extensive establishment as the Abbey, including the Hospitium, Leper-house and Infirmary, a large supply of bread must have been required.

Several kinds of loaves<sup>1</sup> were baked, as we read of loaves of the founder's weight, of smaller ones called *miches*, of Abbot's chopines, or penny loaves, and of a coarser kind, baked out of black wheat, or *blackwyth*. There were also white or monks' loaves, wheaten or *prykked* loaves, and an esquire's bread (*panes armigerorum*), but what the differences were is not clear.

### *The Workshops.*

The Workshops and ateliers belonging to the Abbey must have been numerous and extensive, almost every known handicraft being carried on. Thus there must have been shops for the carpenters, tailors, leather-dressers, plumbers<sup>2</sup>, and so forth, since

<sup>1</sup> Some details regarding the bread used in monasteries will be found in Kitchin's "Compotus Rolls of the Obedientiaries of St. Swithin's Priory, Winchester," where also (p. 399) is the entry: "In pane et vino misso monachis de Radyngge, xij*jd. ob.*"

<sup>2</sup> Lead was in such general use for the roofs, window-glazing and water-pipes connected with a monastery, that the plumbarium must have been an important workshop. Possibly it may have stood near to the "Plummery" wall already referred to (p. 2).

a monastery in those days aimed at being self-supporting and independent of intercourse with the outer world. The most likely site for these workshops is in the buildings in which were located the stables. Possibly the brewery was also located there, although this is a mere conjecture. At least two kinds of beer were brewed, one being called knight's beer (*cervisia militum*) and the other small beer, probably a weaker kind. At the time of the Parliamentary Survey in May, 1650, a dove-house is mentioned as still in existence.

*The Stables.*

The Stables occupied a long range of buildings on the north bank of the Holy Brook, between the Mill and the South Gate (*cf.* Plan of Abbey). How many horses were kept is not known, but as the abbot's retinue included a marshal or master of the horse, a huntsman, a palfrey keeper, a carter, as well as various underlings, the stable was probably well stocked.

*The Water-Supply.*

The Water-supply was derived from two sources, one supply serving for drinking, washing and ordinary domestic purposes, the other for turning the mill-wheel and flushing the sewer. The domestic supply was obtained from a spring, called the Conduit, near Highgrove<sup>1</sup>, Whitley, and flowed through a leaden pipe about two inches in diameter, which passed under the Kennet. The water was cold, clear and soft, and had the reputation of being good for weak eyes. This is not surprising, since the water like other things belonging to religious houses, was popularly regarded as holy and possessed of miraculous virtues. The position of this main pipe may be seen on the accompanying Plan, but no details are known of the complicated system of service pipes<sup>2</sup> which must have ramified throughout the precincts. The other supply came from the Holy Brook, and served to work the Abbey Mill and keep the drains clear, as has been described above. This brook runs in a channel, which leaves the Kennet near Theale, and was probably dug by the monks for the purpose of supplying the Mill.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Darter, "Reminiscences of Reading," p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> For a description of the waterworks and drainage of the Monastery at Canterbury, which those at Reading probably resembled, *cf.* Willis, "Architectural History of the Monastery of Christ Church, Canterbury," p. 158.

*The Gardens.*

There were probably two Gardens attached to the Abbey, the smaller one reserved for the use of the Abbot, while the other supplied the general wants of the establishment. The Abbot's garden probably adjoined the Abbot's Lodging, while the larger one extended from the dividing wall between the outer and the inner court as far as the west wall, and to the south as far as what is now called "Abbey Square."

In these gardens, which were under the control of the Cellarer, would be grown such vegetables as onions, celery, lettuce, carrots, as well as such trees as the apple, pear and plum. No doubt these gardens were also used for purposes of promenade and recreation. In addition to these gardens the Abbey possessed a well-timbered park, stretching away towards Sonning. This park appears to have been well stocked with game, for we read of poachers in 1283<sup>1</sup> hunting and carrying off deer belonging to the Abbot.

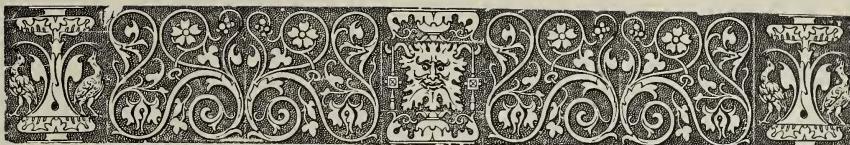
*The Prison.*

The Prison belonging to the Abbey was placed above the Compter Gateway, as at St. Albans, Tewkesbury and other abbeys. In it were confined any criminals belonging to the town, as well as any monks who had been guilty of serious insubordination. Various references to it will be found in the Calendars of Patent Rolls.

*The Cemetery.*

The Cemetery was situated, as was not unusual, to the east of the Church, where many remains of bodies have been unearthed. In it no doubt persons dying in the Hospitium would be buried, the monks themselves being usually laid to rest in the Cloister garth.

<sup>1</sup> "Calendar of Patent Rolls of the Time of Edward I.," 1281-92 (Rolls Series), p. 101.



## Chapter iii.

### *The History of the Abbey.*



EADING ABBEY was founded by King Henry I. on June 18, 1121<sup>1</sup>, and colonised by monks of the Cluniac Order. According to the Foundation Charter, the King's object was "for the Salvation of my soul and "of King William my Father, and of King William "my Brother, and of William my Son, and Queen Maud my "Mother, and Queen Maud my Wife, and of all my ancestors "and successors." But a truer cause for the erection of this, amongst other religious houses, may probably be found in the great spiritual revival which was making itself felt throughout Europe, and of which many contemporary monastic institutions furnish the proof.

The reigning family of England since the days of the Conquest<sup>2</sup> had shown a high regard for the Abbey of Cluny. William the Conqueror begged its Abbot to come over and govern the religious affairs of England, and a spiritual mission was sent in response under the guidance of Warmond, a monk of Cluny.

Henry I. was one of the principal benefactors to the great basilica of St. Peter and St. Paul at Cluny. The Priory of St. Pancras at Lewes, the earliest Cluniac foundation in England, enjoyed his special protection. But the highest mark of favour

<sup>1</sup> "Hoc anno fundata est abbatia Radingis, xiv. Kal. Julii" ("Annales de Waverleia" (Rolls Series), p. 218).

<sup>2</sup> Duckett, "Charters and Records of Cluni," Vol. i., pp. 11, 29.

was shown by his foundation, on a princely scale, of Reading Abbey<sup>1</sup>. During his life he enriched it with splendid endowments, and eventually was buried before the High Altar of its beautiful Church.

At that time Reading was a hamlet of thatched wooden houses<sup>2</sup>, covered with straw and reeds, and grouped around a little Saxon Church, which, together with some of the cottages, was doubtless demolished in order to make room for the monastery.

At the request of King Henry, seven brethren, under Peter, their Prior, were sent over to England by Pontius<sup>3</sup>, Abbot of Cluny, in order to start operations, some brethren from the monastery of St. Pancras at Lewes also giving assistance.

How astonished the quiet villagers must have been at the arrival of these brethren, soon to be followed by an army of workmen and skilled craftsmen; at the loads of stone and timber travelling by road and river; and even more at the massive walls and towers rising steadily, under the skilled supervision of the best artificers that could be obtained! For four years did building operations continue before the new Abbey was dedicated and received its Charter<sup>4</sup>, when doubtless the black-robed monks entered into possession.

But the Abbey Church was much longer in building, and the death of Henry I. in 1135, near Rouen, robbed him of the joy of seeing his work completed.

**1123.** The first Abbot was Hugh de Boves<sup>5</sup>, formerly monk at Cluny

<sup>1</sup> "Toutes les misères trouvèrent un soulagement dans cette riche et puissante maison, qui devint le type des abbayes Clusiennes en Angleterre" (Pignot, "Histoire de l'Ordre de Cluny," Vol. iii., p. 36).

<sup>2</sup> There were only thirty homesteads within the burgh at the time of Domesday.

<sup>3</sup> (f. British Museum, Royal MSS., 8 E. xviii.

<sup>4</sup> In earlier days there had been a religious house at Reading, for the foundation Charter of 1125 speaks of "the Abbey of Reading that was formerly destroyed on account of its sins." Whether this was a monastery or nunnery is uncertain. Possibly it was destroyed in 1006, when the Danes burnt Wallingford.

<sup>5</sup> "Le choix du premier Abbé montra l'importance que le Roi d'Angleterre et l'Ordre de Cluny attachaient à cette fondation. Cet Abbé était Hugues de Boves, allié à la famille des comtes d'Amiens, et parent de Mathieu, prieur de Saint Martin des Champs, plus tard Cardinal-évêque d'Albano. Il avait été l'élève d'Anselme de Laon, moine profès de Cluny, prieur de Saint-Martial de Limoges, puis de Saint Pancrace de Lewes sous l'abbé Lanzon. Il passait pour un des grands théologiens de ce temps" (Pignot, "Histoire de l'Ordre de Cluny," Vol. iii., p. 35).

and Prior of St. Pancras at Lewes, the headquarters of the Cluniacs in this country. He did not, however, remain long at Reading, for in 1130 he was appointed, much against his will<sup>1</sup>, Archbishop of Rouen, where he died in 1164.

The monks of Reading appear to have greatly regretted his departure, and the Abbot of Cluny, Peter the Venerable, wrote a most affectionate letter to him, begging him to visit Cluny. "Nous n'avons point oublié," he says, "combien votre érudition "et votre piété ont fait d'honneur à ce grand et saint troupeau de "Cluny<sup>2</sup>."

1130. Abbot Hugh was succeeded by Aucherius, who had also previously been Prior of St. Pancras at Lewes. During his tenure of office the Leper Hospital of St. Mary Magdalene was erected in 1134 within the precincts.

1135. The next Abbot was named Edward, and it was during his abbacy that Henry I. was buried in the Abbey Church. King Henry had been taken ill at Bois-Lion, near Rouen, and was attended in his last illness by the Archbishop of Rouen, who had formerly been Abbot of Reading, and who gives the following account of the King's death in a letter<sup>3</sup> written to Pope Innocent II.: "He "confessed his sins, beat his breast, and laid aside all animosities. ". . . He devoutly adored the Cross of our Lord, and received His "body and blood. . . . At his own devout request, I anointed him "with Holy Oil. Thus he rested in peace, and may God grant "him the peace that he loved."

His body was embalmed, wrapped in bulls' hides, and brought to Reading, where the obsequies were celebrated with great pomp in the Abbey Church on January 4, 1136, King Stephen, the Archbishops, Bishops and nobles of the kingdom being present at the funeral. Adeliza, the widow of Henry I., gave 100 shillings annually to maintain a lamp which burnt continually before the royal tomb, on which a splendid effigy was subsequently placed.

On the first anniversary of his death, Queen Adeliza<sup>4</sup>, attended by her almoners, chaplains, and the other officers of her house-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Gallia Christiana," Vol. xi., p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Pignot, "Histoire de l'Ordre de Cluny," Vol. iii., p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Malmesbury, "De Gestis Regum Anglorum" (Rolls Series), Vol. ii., p. 537.

<sup>4</sup> Strickland, "Lives of the Queens of England," Vol. i., p. 127.

hold, paid a visit to the Abbey Church, and was received by a number of abbots, priors and monks. Proceeding up the aisle, accompanied by the Bishops of Salisbury and Worcester, she gave public testimony to her regard for her late consort by placing a rich pall on the altar. At the same time she presented to the monks at Reading her manor of Eastone, in Hertfordshire, in order to obtain their prayers for her late husband the King, for her own soul, the souls of her father and mother, and also for the health of King Stephen and Queen Maud his wife.

### **Stephen.**

1140. The reign of Stephen was not an eventful one, as far as the Abbey was concerned, but the King paid a visit to it in 1140, on his way to Wallingford Castle, and in 1141 the Empress Maud was received at Reading with great honour. Soon after she conferred the bishopric of London on Robert de Sigello, a monk of Reading Abbey.

### **Henry i.**

1154. Abbot Edward was succeeded by Abbot Reginald.

1156. William, the eldest son of King Henry, was buried at Reading<sup>1</sup>.

1158. Abbot Reginald resigned his office on account of the hatred of the King, and was succeeded by Abbot Roger.

1163. A duel was fought at Reading between Robert de Montfort and Henry de Essex, on the island just below Caversham Bridge, the occasion of which was as follows : In an engagement which Henry II. had with the Welsh in 1157, some of the nobles, who had been detached with a considerable part of the army, were cut off by an ambuscade. Those who escaped, thinking the King was also surrounded, spread the rumour that he was either taken or slain. The news of this imaginary disaster led to the flight of the greater part of the remaining army. Among others, Henry de Essex, hereditary standard-bearer to the Kings of England, threw away the Royal Banner and fled with the rest. For this act of cowardice, he was challenged by Robert de Montfort as a traitor. Essex denied the charge, declaring he was fully persuaded at the

<sup>1</sup> "Flores Historiarum" (Rolls Series), Vol. ii., pp. 74, 75.

time that the King was slain or taken prisoner, as indeed probably would have happened, had not Roger, Earl of Clare, brought up a body of troops, and by displaying again the Royal Standard encouraged the soldiers, and thus saved the remainder of the army.

The King ordered this quarrel to be decided by single combat, and the two knights met at Reading on April 8, the King being present, together with many of the nobility and other spectators. Montfort began the combat with great fury, Essex acting on the defensive. This lasted for a while, but at length Essex, "turning "reason into rage, took upon himself the part of a challenger and "not of a defender," and fell after receiving many wounds. The King, supposing him slain, at the request of several noblemen who were relations, gave permission to the monks to inter the body, commanding that no further violence should be offered to it. The monks took up the vanquished knight, and carried him into the Abbey, where he recovered from his wounds. Eventually he joined the community and assumed the habit of a monk, his estates being confiscated.

1164. On Sunday, April 19<sup>1</sup>, the great Conventual Church was hallowed by Thomas à Becket<sup>2</sup>, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of King Henry II., ten suffragan bishops and many nobles.

William (I.), also called William le Templier, was elected Abbot.

1173. On February 25, at Limoges, William le Templier<sup>3</sup> was consecrated Archbishop of Bordeaux, King Henry II. being present. At Reading he was succeeded by Joseph.

1175. Reginald, Earl of Cornwall, a natural son of King Henry I. by Sybil, daughter of Robert Corbet, of Longden, in Shropshire, was buried at the Abbey.

<sup>1</sup> Eyton, "Court, Household and Itinerary of King Henry II.," p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> "Anno Domini MCLXIV, et anno regni regis Henrici Secundi decimo. Hoc anno consecratum est nobile illud et regale monasterium de Redynge a Sancto Thoma Cantuariae Archiepiscopo, præsente Henrico Secundo rege" ("Annales de Bermundesia," Rolls Series, p. 441). The word "Reading" is not always easily recognised, as it appears in the older chronicles. Amongst more than seventy spellings, the following are perhaps worth mentioning : Radding, Radin', Radyngge, Radyngt, Raidynggum, Readyge, Redden, Redding, Redingges, Redinggiæ, Redyngg, Redyngia, Rheadyge, Rheding, Riddig, Ridingum, Roedingen.

<sup>3</sup> Eyton (*loc. cit.*), p. 171.

On Whitsunday, June 1, the King and Prince Henry held their Court and a royal festival at Reading<sup>1</sup>.

1177. Henry II. spent Easter at the Abbey.

1180. Abbot Joseph was succeeded by Abbot Hugh (II.), "vir magnæ "religionis et honestatis vitæ<sup>2</sup>," and a great benefactor to the Abbey.

Abbot Hugh built the Hospitium of St. John the Baptist, and enlarged St. Laurence's Church, as is described in Chapter II. Leland<sup>3</sup> says of him that "he was a skilful divine, from education "and diligence in his studies ; and that in the course of his reading "he produced many elaborate observations upon subjects which "were abstruse to inexperienced students. His theological ques- "tions are not trivial, but give light to difficult passages of scrip- "ture." Hugh further wrote a treatise, "De Orthodoxa Fide" in seven books ; and there are also some of his epistles still extant, chiefly addressed to Pope Celestine II. and Peter Blesensis, of which "Pits says he had seen a manuscript copy at Lovaine, in the "library of John Fenn<sup>4</sup>." According to Bulæus, he wrote a treatise concerning heresies which had sprung up in Brittany, "Super "hæresibus in Armorico solo natis."

In the same year Prince Henry visited his father, King Henry II., at Reading, and swore to observe his will and pleasure. He further consulted his father about the aggressions made by the young King Philip, in conjunction with the Comte of Flanders, on the rights of Philip's mother and other French nobles.

1184. The King held a Council<sup>5</sup> on August 5, in order to elect an Archbishop in the place of Richard, the successor of Becket, John, Archbishop of Dublin, the Duke of Saxony, the suffragan Bishop of the province, and the monks of Christchurch, in Canterbury, being present. The King discountenanced the nominees of the Prior and Convent of Canterbury, the Council being eventually adjourned to Windsor.

1185. On March 17 "Eraclius<sup>6</sup>, the Patriarch of the Holy Resurrec-

<sup>1</sup> Eyton, "Court, Household, and Itinerary of King Henry II.," p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> "Annales de Waverleia" (Rolls Series), p. 252.

<sup>3</sup> "Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis," p. 265.

<sup>4</sup> Coates, "History of Reading," p. 283.

<sup>5</sup> Eyton, p. 257 ; "Gervase of Canterbury" (Rolls Series), Vol. i., p. 311.

<sup>6</sup> Or Heraclius.

“tion, and Lord Roger, the Master of the Hospitallers, paid a “visit to Henry, King of England, at Reading. And when they “had related to him the object of their journey, they moved the “King and all their hearers to tears, by describing the unheard-of “desolation of the Holy Land. They also brought the King many “memorable tokens in confirmation of their petition, namely relics “of the Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ, and the “keys of the Tower of David and of the Holy Sepulchre. They “also, with tears, told him of the rash and wicked purpose of “Saladin, and showed him the papal letters which contained a full “account of those events, with a great number of testimonials. But “the King, after considering the matter, replied ‘that for him to “accept the kingdom of Jerusalem which they offered him, to go “thither and desert the kingdom of England, and expose it to its “hostile neighbours, would not, as he imagined, be acceptable to “God, since this kingdom was as pleasing to God and as devout “as the other.’ So the Patriarch, being disappointed in his hope, “returned to his own country<sup>1</sup>. ”

1186. King Henry II. was again at the Abbey<sup>2</sup>, and there received Ranulf de Glanvill; William de Mandevill, Earl of Essex and Albemarle; and Walter, Archbishop of Rouen, the three ambassadors whom he had sent over to France to pacify King Philip, who was demanding the wardship of Elianor, the presumed heiress of Brittany. The King consulted with Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and then ordered the ambassadors to return forthwith to Philip, substituting Robert, Archdeacon of Nottingham, for Ranulf de Glanvill. They were to procure a prolongation of the truce that had been made.

### Richard I.

1191. The Great Council<sup>3</sup> of the Realm was convened at the Abbey.  
1193. About this year was completed the great Hospitium of St. John the Baptist, which had been necessitated by the increased number

<sup>1</sup> “Flores Historiarum” (Rolls Series), Vol. ii., p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Eyton, “Court, Household, and Itinerary of King Henry II.,” p. 274.

<sup>3</sup> Coates (“History of Reading,” p. 252) says, “Richard I., in the second year of his reign, 1191, . . . held a Parliament at Reading.” Cf. also Cooper King (“History of Berkshire,” p. 179). The expression “Great Council” is preferable.

of pilgrims and wayfarers resorting to the Abbey. Further details will be found on p. 16.

### John.

1199. Abbot Hugh was appointed Abbot of Cluny<sup>1</sup>, and was succeeded in the following year by Abbot Helias, "vir per omnia laudabilis<sup>2</sup>."
1206. John of Florence, Legate from Pope Innocent III., held a Council at the Abbey, for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation between the King and some exiled bishops, and of levying money from the clergy.
1207. Joceline de Welles was consecrated Bishop of Bath and Wells at the Abbey. The Pope granted "protection and confirmation of "possessions and privileges to Helias, the Abbot, and the Cluniac "convent of Reading<sup>3</sup>."
1209. As a result of a serious disturbance<sup>4</sup> between the burghers and the clerks at Oxford, about 3,000 of the masters and students left the University, and settled some at Reading and some at other towns, where they continued their studies. The cause of this secession was the discovery of a young woman who had been killed, either by accident or wilfully, by an Oxford student. The discovery so enraged the townsmen that, failing to arrest the real offender, they seized in his stead two innocent students who lodged in the same house with him, cast them into prison, and eventually hanged them outside the walls of Oxford. This violation, by ignoble laymen, of the common rights of scholars or clerks, who claimed to be subject only to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, caused such indignation that almost the whole of the masters and students abandoned the University.

1213. An important ecclesiastical Council was held by King John at

<sup>1</sup> "Hoc anno (i.e. 1199) obiit dominus abbas Hugo IV., 6 idus Aprilis. . . . Et dominus Hugo V. abbas Radicensis, sive de Radengis, electus est. Obiit hoc anno Richardus rex Anglorum" ("Annales de Cluni," *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis*, Col. 1625).

"Hugo, abbas Radengae, Cluniacensis abbas factus est" ("Annales de Wintonia and de Waverleia," Rolls Series, pp. 73, 251, 252).

<sup>2</sup> "Cui successit bonaë memorie Helias camerarius, vir per omnia laudabilis" ("Annales de Wigornia," Rolls Series, p. 390).

<sup>3</sup> "Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland—Papal Letters," Vol. i., p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Lyte, "History of the University of Oxford," p. 17.

the Abbey on December 6, probably in its Chapter-house. The Council was attended by Nicolas, the Cardinal Legate, Archbishop Langton and the other bishops, who demanded of the King compensation for what the bishops and other ecclesiastics had lost, during the Interdict. In the same year Simon became Abbot, in succession to Helias.

1215. The Bishops of Bath and Wells, of Coventry, and of Lichfield, were consecrated at the Abbey.

In the same year the Abbot of Reading and the Bishop of Winchester, with Pandulph the Legate, were appointed delegates for promulgating the sentence of excommunication against the barons who persisted in opposing the King. They were continued<sup>1</sup> in commission the following year, when many of those barons were excommunicated by name.

### Henry III.

1218. The Abbot of Reading was appointed by Pandulph, the Pope's Legate, to be his representative in a dispute between the Bishop of Bath and the Abbot and Convent of Glastonbury.
- c. 1225. A monk of Reading Abbey transcribed "Sumer is icumen in"<sup>2</sup>.
1226. Adam de Latebar or de Lathbury was appointed Abbot.
1227. King Henry III. kept his Christmas at Reading, when the Abbey was the scene of great festivities in honour of the royal visit.
1228. The fifth General Chapter of the English Benedictine Abbots and Priors was probably held at Reading, under the presidency of the Abbots of Westminster and Peterborough<sup>3</sup>.
1233. The Franciscans, or Friars Minor, who came over to England in 1224, received a grant of land<sup>4</sup> from the Abbot of Reading for the building of their Friary. The land was a piece of waste ground near the king's highway leading to Caversham Bridge, measuring 33 perches in length and 23 in breadth, with permission

<sup>1</sup> MSS. of Canterbury Cathedral, Hist. MSS. Comm., Fifth Report, Appendix,

p. 454.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Chapter IX.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Chapter VI.

<sup>4</sup> "Eodem anno fratres minores volentes habitare in burgo Sancti Edmundi, item in burgo de Redingis, ad ipsum abbatem de Redingis literas tam Apostolicas quam regis impetrarunt, ut licet eis habitare in villa de Redingis" ("Annales de Dunstaplia," Rolls Series, p. 134).

to build and to dwell there, on condition that they were not to ask alms, acquire property or solicit donations. About fifty years later, in 1285, a fresh piece of land was granted them, on which the monastery of the Grey Friars was built in 1306. But their church, probably dedicated to St. James, was not completed until 1311.

1235. Robert Grosseteste was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln, and Hugh was consecrated Bishop of St. Asaph by Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury.

In this same year was granted an Indult to the Prior and Convent of Canterbury that their right to have all bishops of the province consecrated in their Church should not be prejudiced by their having permitted the Archbishop to consecrate the Bishop of Lincoln at Reading<sup>1</sup>.

1238. Richard de Cicestria<sup>2</sup> succeeded Adam de Lathbury as Abbot<sup>3</sup>. He did not, however, hold office for long, for in his turn he was succeeded, probably in 1239, by Adam (I.).

1240. "In this year<sup>4</sup> all the archbishops, bishops, chief abbots and "some of the nobles of the kingdom, assembled at Reading to hear "a message from the Pope, published by the Legate" (*i.e.* Otto). "And when they had all assembled, the Legate . . . on behalf of "the Pope, urgently demanded the fifth part of all their goods, by "means of which he might be able to repel the injuries of such a "powerful enemy" (*i.e.* the Emperor Frederick). "To this the "bishops, after holding a council, replied that they would never "endure such an insupportable burden, which concerned the entire "Church, without careful and prolonged deliberation."

Eventually the clergy of Berkshire made a bold stand against the demands of the Pope, and declined to grant him any subsidies.

1243. The King received a grant of one hundred marks from the Abbey, as he was going into Gascony.

1244. On September 11, Roger, Precentor of Salisbury, was consecrated Bishop of Bath and Wells by William de Ralye, Bishop

<sup>1</sup> "Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland," Vol. i., p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> "Annales de Theokesberia" (Rolls Series), p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> "Obiit Adam, abbas de Radinges, successitque ei Ricardus, sub-prior ejusdem domus" ("Annales de Waverleia," Rolls Series, p. 318).

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Paris, "Historia Anglorum," Rolls Series, Vol. ii., p. 431.

of Winchester<sup>1</sup>. Roger was a man of polite manners, and a learned theologian.

1245. Richard Blondy, Chancellor<sup>2</sup> of the Church at Exeter, "vir "sanctus et eleganter literatus," was consecrated Bishop of Exeter in the Abbey Church by Fulco Basset, Bishop of London.

1249. Adam (II.), who had previously been sacrist, was elected Abbot, followed in the same year by William (II.), sub-prior of Coventry, who was succeeded by Richard (II.).

1258. King Henry III. endeavoured to borrow a large sum of money from Reading and other abbeys, but was refused by all. The Abbot of Reading was especially firm.

1259. King Henry III. was present at the pleadings of the Courts of Justice of Michaelmas term.

1261. Richard de Banaster, otherwise de Rading, was elected Abbot.

1263. Parliament was convened at Reading<sup>3</sup>.

1264. A Council of Bishops<sup>4</sup> assembled at Reading.

1265. In this year the number of Abbots summoned to Parliament was reduced from sixty-four to twenty-five. The Abbot of Reading, however, retained the privilege of being one of those summoned.

1268. Robert de Burghate, or de Burgate, was appointed Abbot. This Abbot received the King's assent to his election on July 15, and had the temporalities restored to him on July 20. It was this Abbot who, without the consent of the majority of the monks, alienated to William Lamberton, Bishop of St. Andrews, the priory of May, one of the cells to the Abbey.

1271. A Council of Bishops was held respecting the jurisdiction of the Chapter of Canterbury<sup>5</sup>.

## Edward I.

1275. At this time the Abbey was heavily in debt, and the King took into his own hands the management of its affairs, and

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Paris, "English History" (Bohn's Ed.), Vol. ii., p. 32. In "Historia Anglorum" (Rolls Series), Vol. ii., p. 495, nothing is said about this consecration taking place at Reading.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Paris, "Historia Anglorum" (Rolls Series), Vol. ii., p. 508.

<sup>3</sup> This is given on the authority of "Annales de Dunstaplia" (Rolls Series), p. 225. But no mention of this Parliament occurs in Parry's "Parliaments and Councils of England."

<sup>4</sup> "Annales de Wigornia" (Rolls Series), p. 453.

<sup>5</sup> "Annales de Wintonia et de Waverleia" (Rolls Series), pp. 110, 377.

appointed a commissioner, Roland de Harlegh, knight, to administer the affairs of the Abbey.

1278. Robert de Burghate, Abbot of Reading, and the Abbot of Glastonbury effected a reconciliation<sup>1</sup> between the Bishop of Winchester on the one hand, and the Convent of Winchester and the monks of St. Swithun on the other.

1279. An ecclesiastical Council<sup>2</sup> was held, probably in the Chapter House of the Abbey, by John Peckham, who had just been consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury by Nicholas III. On his return from Rome the Archbishop summoned his suffragan bishops to meet him at Reading on July 29, when the clergy of his province were directed "to explain to their parishioners, amongst other things, the sentences of excommunication issued against the impugners of Magna Carta; against those who obtained royal writs to obstruct ecclesiastical suits, and against all, whether the King's officers or not, who neglected to carry out the sentences of the ecclesiastical courts".

Another statute passed at this Council ordained<sup>4</sup> that the different bishops should punish any runaways from Oxford who should seek shelter in their respective dioceses.

1287. William de Sutton was elected Abbot. After the death of Robert de Burgate, the Abbey allowed the sum of eight pounds for three refections and obits for his soul and the souls of Nigellus his father, and of Felicia his mother.

1288. The papal licence<sup>5</sup> was granted to the Abbot to use the mitre, ring, gloves, dalmatic, tunicle and sandals of a mitred Abbot.

1295. Edward I. caused all monasteries to be searched, and the money found in them to be brought up to London. Not being satisfied, however, by what was collected by these means, he extorted a further contribution from the clergy, and the Abbot of Reading was appointed collector for the diocese of Salisbury.

1304. The Abbot and monks of Reading were summoned, together

<sup>1</sup> "Annales de Waverleia" (Rolls Series), p. 389.

<sup>2</sup> Coates, "History of Reading," p. 251; "Annales de Oseneia" (Rolls Series), p. 281.

<sup>3</sup> Stubbs, "Constitutional History," Vol. ii., p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> Lyte, "History of the University of Oxford," p. 132.

<sup>5</sup> "Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland,—Papal Letters," Vol. i., p. 495.

with the other collectors of a tenth, to give an account of the money collected, on the morrow of St. Hilary.

1305. Nicholas de Quappelade, who had previously been precentor, was elected Abbot. Soon after his installation he discovered that the Abbey was in debt to the extent of £1,227 7s. 8d., which debt he endeavoured to reduce by lessening the number of servants employed in the Abbey and diminishing the annual expenditure.

### Edward ii.

1314. The Lady Chapel, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was erected.

### Edward iii.

1327. The Abbot<sup>1</sup> contributed a glass window and other gifts towards the new chapel at Balliol College, Oxford.

1328. John Stoke de Appleford, or de Appelton, was elected Abbot.

1337. King Edward III. borrowed jewels, a gold chalice, a gold casket in the form of a shrine, and other valuables from the Abbey. At the time of the loan he promised either to return or pay for them, but there is no record of any fulfilment of the promise.

1341. Henry de Appleford was elected Abbot.

1346. King Edward III. held a great "Justing" at Reading, and, at his departure, being in want of money to carry on the war against France, borrowed a hundred pounds from the monks, as a security for which he pledged his jewels.

1359. The marriage of John of Gaunt, fourth son of Edward III. and afterwards Duke of Lancaster, with his cousin Blanche, daughter of Henry Plantagenet, Duke of Lancaster, was solemnized in the Abbey Church on May 19. The bridal ceremonial was the occasion of a splendid pageant and of great rejoicing, tilts and tournaments, in which the King, his four sons and nineteen knights took part, lasting for a whole fortnight. The occasion has been celebrated in a poem formerly attributed to Chaucer, entitled "Chaucer's Ceres Dreme," which thus describes the circumstances :

" And the feste<sup>2</sup> holde was in tentis,  
 " As to telle you myn entent is,

<sup>1</sup> Lyte, "History of the University of Oxford," p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> Chaucer's "Poetical Works" (Bohn's Library), Vol. iii., p. 502.

" In a rome<sup>1</sup> a large pleyne<sup>2</sup>  
 " Under a wode, in a champayne,  
 " Betwixe a river and a welle,  
 " Wher never had abbeye, ne selle  
 " Ben, ne kirke, hous, ne village,  
 " In time of any mannes age.  
 " And dured thre monethes the feste,  
 " In one estate, and never ceste,  
 " From erly the rising of the sonne  
 " Til the deye spente was and yronne,  
 " In justing, dauncing and lustinesse,  
 " And al that sowned to gentilnesse."

And again :

" Unto a tente, prince and princes,  
 " Me thought, brought me and my maistres.  
 " And seyde we were at fulle age  
 " Ther to conclude our marriage,  
 " With ladyes, knightes, and squieres,  
 " And a grete ost of ministeres ;  
 " With instrumentes and sounes diverse.  
 " That longe were here to reherse.  
 " Which tente chirche perochial  
 " Ordeint was in especial  
 " For the feste and for the sacre.  
 " Wher archbishop, and archdiacre  
 " Songe ful oute the servise,  
 " After the custome and the gise,  
 " And the chirches ordinaunce."

1360. William de Dombleton was elected Abbot.

About this time, owing to the monks being accused of vices and irregularities, Thomas de la Mare<sup>3</sup>, Abbot of St. Albans, then President of the General Chapter of the Benedictines, was appointed by Edward III. to inspect Reading Abbey amongst others. A number of abuses were reformed, and some of the monks who had conspired against the Abbot were sent away to one of the dependent cells.

1368. John de Sutton was elected Abbot.

<sup>1</sup> Possibly this is a misprint for "a rome (roomy) *and* large pleyne."

<sup>2</sup> Man ("History of Reading," p. 16) suggests that King's Mead, lying between the Abbey and the Thames, was the site of these festivities, adding that "in the month of May no place could be better adapted for such an occasion."

<sup>3</sup> Newcome, "History of St. Alban," p. 249.

**Richard i.j.**

1378. Richard de Yateley was elected Abbot.  
1381. William Courtney, Bishop of London, son of Hugh Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was appointed Chancellor by Richard II. in Reading Abbey.  
1384. Many of the nobles of the realm, together with the Mayor and Aldermen of London, assembled at Reading to condemn John Northampton, late Mayor of London, for sedition.  
1389. On May 3 a grand Council was held at Reading, when the King, aged 22, dismissed his former advisers, and declared himself ready to take the reins of government into his own hands. By his early appearance at the Council, John of Gaunt prevented any dispute arising between the King and the barons, and so softened the resentment existing between them that, when the Council was dissolved, all went peacefully to their own homes.

**Henry iv.**

1403. King Henry IV. was at the Abbey, and took up a large consignment of rich cloth of gold as a present for his bride Johanna<sup>1</sup>.  
1409. Thomas Erle, or de Erley, was elected Abbot.

**Henry v.**

1413. The Leper-house of St. Mary Magdalene<sup>2</sup> was closed, because no lepers were forthcoming.  
1414. An inquisition was held to examine whether the Abbot had not unjustly kept back the revenues of the hospital called "Redinge Spitel," in which ten lepers were to be maintained, and for the support of which he had 300 acres of land in Spittlefield, Lerketfield, and other places.  
1416. Constantia, daughter of Edmund de Langley, Duke of York, son of Edward III., the wife of Thomas Lord Despenser, Earl of Gloucester, was buried before the High Altar in the Abbey Church.  
1417. This year the King kept his Christmas at Kenilworth, and on

<sup>1</sup> Wylie, "History of England under Henry IV.," Vol. i., p. 310.

<sup>2</sup> "Prize Essays on Leprosy" (New Sydenham Society, 1895), p. 126.

the morrow after Christmas Day seditious papers, abusing all estates of the Church, were dispersed in almost every great house and hospital of the towns of St. Albans, Northampton, Reading and in other places.

### **Henry vi.**

1427. Twenty-nine Articles were read at Reading respecting rules to be observed by the King's Council, the honours to be paid to the Duchess of Bedford, and a declaration of allegiance to the King.

1430. Thomas Henley was appointed Abbot.

1440. The Parliament, which assembled at Westminster on November 12, 1439, was adjourned on December 21 to meet at Reading<sup>1</sup> on January 14, 1440, Mr. William Tresham being Speaker.

At this Parliament it was ordained that all foreign merchants should lodge with Englishmen, and dispose of their goods and make purchases within the space of six or eight months, paying the person with whom they lodged twopence in the pound for what they bought or sold, except the Easterlings, and that every householder who was an alien should pay to the King thirteen pence a year, and every servant alien sixpence.

Measures were also taken against dishonest purveyors. At this Parliament, too, a new rank in the English peerage, viz. that of "Viscount," was constituted, John Lord Beaumont being created Viscount Beaumont by King Henry VI.

1445. King Henry VI. granted to the Abbot by patent the permission to erect in the Abbey a perpetual Chantry of three chaplains, to pray for the good estate of the King, with the privilege of holding lands and tenements to the value of £20, on paying into the Chancery a fine of 40 marks.

1446. John Thorne (I.) was elected Abbot.

1452. Parliament adjourned on November 20 to Reading, on account of the insalubrity of the air at Westminster, but soon after adjourned to February 11, owing to plague in Reading itself ("de magna mortalitate in dicta villa de Redyng jam regnante<sup>2</sup>").

1453. Parliament was convened on March 6, and met in the Refectory at Reading. "The place<sup>3</sup> was probably selected as

<sup>1</sup> Stubbs, "Constitutional History," Vol. iii., p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> Creighton, "A History of Epidemics in Britain," Vol. i., p. 229.

<sup>3</sup> Stubbs (*loc. cit.*), Vol. iii., pp. 167, 400; Rot. Parl., Vol. v., p. 227.

"one free from the York influence, which was strong in London, "and the election of the Speaker showed that the Duke was not "likely to have his own way in the assembly. The choice fell on "Thomas Thorpe, a knight of the shire for Essex and a baron of "the Exchequer, who was strongly opposed to him. The session "was short; little was done beyond granting supplies, the liber- "ality of which seems to show that the pacification was regarded as "satisfactory. A grant of a tenth and of a fifteenth was voted; "the other taxes, tunnage and poundage, the subsidy on wool, and "the alien tax, were continued for the King's life.

"A force of 20,000 archers was, moreover, granted, to be main- "tained by the counties, cities and towns, according to their sub- "stance. These grants were made on March 28, and the Parlia- "ment was then prorogued to April 25, when it was to meet at "Westminster."

The following November<sup>1</sup> the Parliament again met at Reading, only to be prorogued till the following February. On February 11, 1454<sup>2</sup>, the assembly was prorogued till the 14th at Westminster.

### Edward iv.

1464.

At the time that the treaty was being made for the marriage of the King with the Lady Bona, sister-in-law of Charles VII., King of France, a secret marriage was privately celebrated between the King and Elizabeth Woodville, daughter of Jaquet, Duchess of Bedford, and widow of Sir John Grey. This marriage was kept secret for six months. But at a Council of the peers held at Reading on Michaelmas Day, Edward IV. publicly declared Elizabeth<sup>3</sup> to be his wedded wife and their lawful Queen. She was then led in solemn pomp by the Duke of Clarence to the Abbey Church, where she received the congratulations of all the assembled nobility.

In this year, too, was married, at the Abbey, Lord Maltravers,

<sup>1</sup> Stubbs, "Constitutional History," Vol. iii., p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> Stubbs (*loc. cit.*), Vol. iii., p. 170.

<sup>3</sup> Strickland ("Lives of the Queens of England," Vol. ii., p. 10) states that a portrait in an illumination at the British Museum (Royal MSS., 15 E. IV.) represents Elizabeth Woodville as she appeared at Reading in her bridal costume. But no evidence for this statement is given, while the details of the picture cannot be reconciled with the topography of Reading Abbey.

son and heir of William Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel, to Margaret, sister to the Queen of Edward IV.

1466. Parliament was adjourned from Westminster to Reading, on account of the prevalence of the plague<sup>1</sup> in London.

1467. The third Parliament of Edward IV. assembled at Westminster on July 1, but on account of the heat and of the plague, from which several members of the House of Commons had died, was adjourned to November 6, at Reading, where "in a certain apartment within the Abbey, prepared for the purpose, the King being seated on a royal throne, and the three estates in full Parliament assembled, Robert, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Chancellor of England, declared the said Parliament again prorogued to the fifth of May next ensuing at Reading<sup>2</sup>."

1468. The Parliament met accordingly at Reading on May 5<sup>3</sup>, but was adjourned to May 12 at Westminster.

1480. About this year was suppressed the Hospitium of St. John the Baptist.

### *Henry vij.*

1485. In this year the King was probably at Reading, and directed the Hospitium of St. John, which had previously been suppressed, to be converted into a Grammar School<sup>4</sup>.

1486. John Thorne (II.) was elected Abbot.

The Grammar School received the name of "Royal Grammar School of King Henry VII."

### *Henry viii.*

1509. The King paid a visit to Reading, as appears by an entry in the Churchwarden's book of St. Laurence's Church.

1519. Thomas Worcester was elected Abbot.

1520. Hugh, alias Hugh Cook Faringdon, previously sub-Chamberlain, was elected thirty-first Abbot. Soon after the election he received a visit from King Henry VIII.

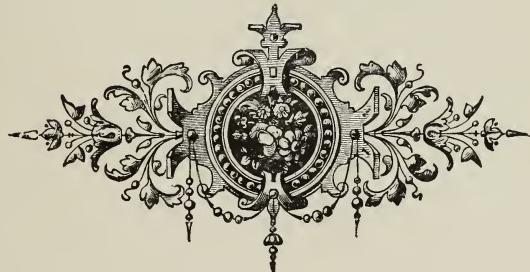
<sup>1</sup> Creighton, "A History of Epidemics in Great Britain," Vol. i., p. 230.

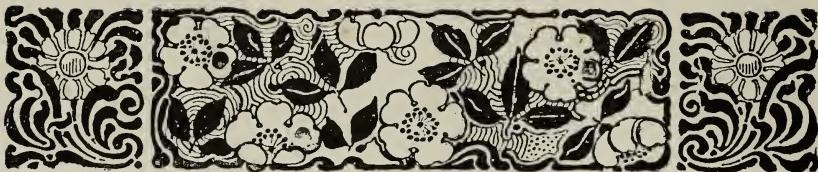
<sup>2</sup> Stubbs, "Constitutional History," Vol. iii., p. 400; Creighton, "A History of Epidemics in Great Britain," Vol. i., p. 230; Coates, "History of Reading," p. 254.

<sup>3</sup> Stubbs ("Constitutional History," Vol. iii., p. 210) states that Parliament met at Reading on May 12.

<sup>4</sup> Further particulars will be found in Chapter II., p. 19.

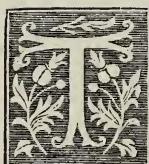
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1538. Thomas Lord Cromwell, afterwards Earl of Essex, was appointed by the Abbot to the office of Seneschal, or High Steward, of Reading.
1539. Dissolution of the Abbey.  
Execution of the Abbot, Hugh Cook Faringdon, with two of his monks, John Eynon and John Rugg.





## Chapter iv.

### *The Martyrdom of Hugh Faringdon.*



HE martyrdom of Hugh Faringdon, the favourite Abbot of King Henry VIII., forms one of the most dramatic incidents in the suppression of the monasteries. A brief sketch of the man destined for such a cruel fate will be of interest.

#### *The Life of Hugh Faringdon.*

Born of humble parents, Hugh Cook Faringdon, probably so called from the place of his birth, is described by Hall "as a "stubborn monke, and utterly without learning"<sup>1</sup>"; and in a letter to the University of Oxford he even speaks of himself as having no pretensions to be considered learned. Nevertheless, he must have had a taste for literature and study, since he laments that fate had denied him the advantages of a good education, and expresses a desire to join the University of Oxford. Moreover, Leonard Cox, the head-master of Reading School, in 1524 dedicates to him a book entitled "The Art or Craft of Rhetorick," as to one who "hath allwayes tenderly favoured the profyte of yonge studentes."<sup>2</sup>

Faringdon appears to have been a man of strong character, with

<sup>1</sup> "Chronicle containing the History of England," p. 382.

<sup>2</sup> "Dictionary of National Biography," sub. "Faringdon." Further evidence of his interest in promising pupils will be found in "Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII.," Vol. vii., Nos. 1451 and 1452.



*Abbot Hugh Cook Faringdon*

FIG. IX.—*Abbot Hugh Cook Faringdon.*



decided religious convictions, and willing to uphold them even at the cost of his life. Evidence of this will be found in the strict discipline maintained both at Reading and at the dependent Priory of Leominster<sup>1</sup>, and also in his heroic death a few years later. The only portrait that has come down to us was formerly in a window at Bere Court, near Pangbourne, and shows an erect figure, mitred and robed, with determined face, firm-set lips, long dark hair, giving the impression of mingled sternness and humour (Fig. IX.). Various letters, signed "Hugh, Abbot of Redynge," are still preserved in the Record Office, and an illustration of his autograph accompanies the portrait.

For many years Faringdon was in high favour, both with the King and with Thomas Cromwell, whose *bienveillance* he, as many another in those days, did not hesitate to secure by bribes. Nor was he averse to a good table, if we may judge from a letter to his friend Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle<sup>2</sup>, accepting his offer of "wine and herring," and asking for "four tuns of red and claret, "for which your lordship shall be paid," and also "one barrel of herring for my own eating, how dear soever they be."

The blazon of Hugh Cook Faringdon's arms is as follows :

*Gules, a chevron compony, counter-compony, argent and sable, between three plates, each charged with a cinquefoil purpure; on a chief or, a dove between two columbines, azure, slipt vert* (Fig. X.).

These arms<sup>3</sup>, which belong to the family of Cook, were probably passed by Sir Christopher Barker, the Garter King of Arms from 1536 to 1550. Before that he was Norroy King of Arms, but probably when Rouge Dragon, or Richmond Herald, he had passed the Patent by the Garter or Clarenceux of the day, as Kings of Arms alone grant arms, unless by Patent of the Sovereign direct.

Faringdon was sub-Chamberlain when Abbot Thomas Worcester

<sup>1</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. vii., No. 1449; Vol. viii., No. 593.

<sup>2</sup> "Lisle Papers," Vol. vii. 4. Lord Lisle, a natural son of Edward IV., had a stepson, James Basset, at the Abbey School ("Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. vii., No. 1452).

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to Mr. Everard Green, Rouge Dragon, of the Heralds' College, for these notes on Faringdon's arms, and for the following list of authorities: Barker's "Grants," E.D. N. 56, fol. 47a; Benolt's "Visitation of Devon and Cornwall in 1531," G. 2, fol. 101; "Arms of Abbeys and Priorys," a MS. painted between 1525 and 1536, L. 10, fol. 74a; Ashmole's "Visitation of Berks, 1664-66," C. 12, Part ii., fol. 199.

died in July, 1520, and in the following November was elected by his brethren to fill the vacancy.

After the confirmation of his election, the new Abbot was blessed by the Bishop's suffragan and solemnly installed. Two days later King Henry VIII. paid a visit to the Abbot, from whom he received a "goodly present of great pykes, great carps, salmon, 'sturgeon and other fish<sup>1</sup>."

Of Faringdon's zeal for the Roman Catholic religion, some proof exists in a letter written in 1530 to the University of Oxford. At that time there happened to be at the Abbey a monk called Dom John Holyman<sup>2</sup>, who had resigned a Fellowship at New College, Oxford, in order to take the cowl at Reading. Holyman seems to have been a stout adversary of Lutheranism, so much so that when about to take his doctorate, the request is made by Faringdon that the sermon usually delivered before the University may be omitted, and that Holyman may preach in London instead, as that city was infected with Lutheranism, and needed such a popular defender of the faith as Holyman.

Faringdon appears to have taken his share in the public work expected of a mitred Abbot, and his name occurs among the Justices of the Peace for Berkshire in 1532<sup>3</sup>.

The Abbey, too, was well managed under his rule, if we may judge from the following report made in 1535 by the Commissioners for the suppression of the monasteries :

"They have a gudde lecture in scripture dayly redde in ther 'chapitour-howse, bothe in Inglyshe and Laten, to the wich ys 'gudde resortt, and the abbott ys at yt hym self<sup>4</sup>."

Again, somewhat later, when his diocesan, Nicholas Shaxton, Bishop of Salisbury, objected to a certain reader at the Abbey called Roger London, on the ground that his teaching was calculated to keep the monks too faithful to the See of Rome, Faringdon wrote to Cromwell, declining the substitute suggested, on the ground that he was married and therefore degraded<sup>5</sup>; and

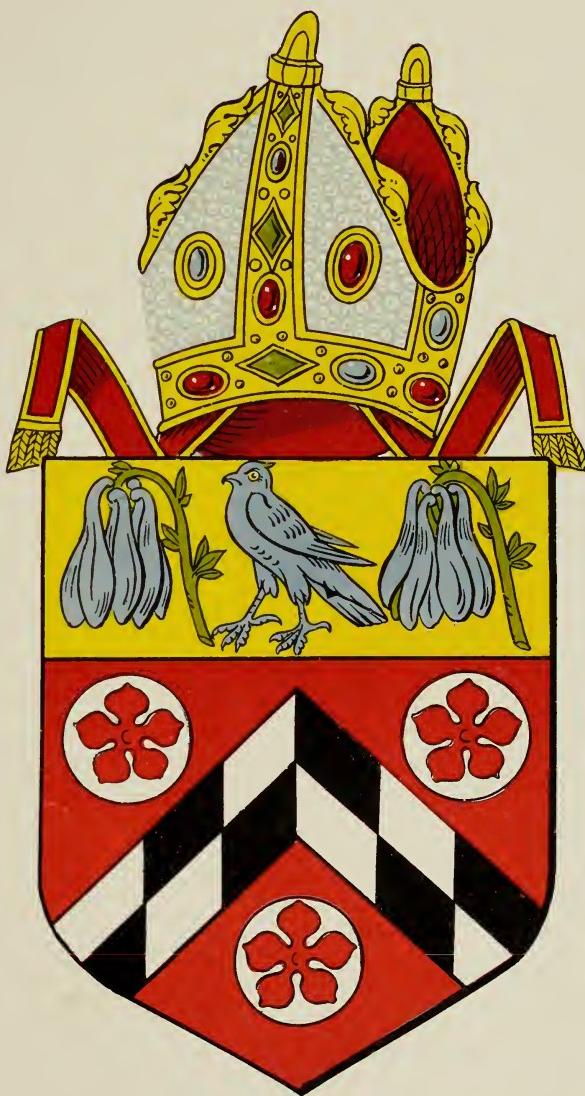
<sup>1</sup> "Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.," Vol. iii., No. 1008.

<sup>2</sup> Gasquet, "Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries," Vol. ii., p. 359.

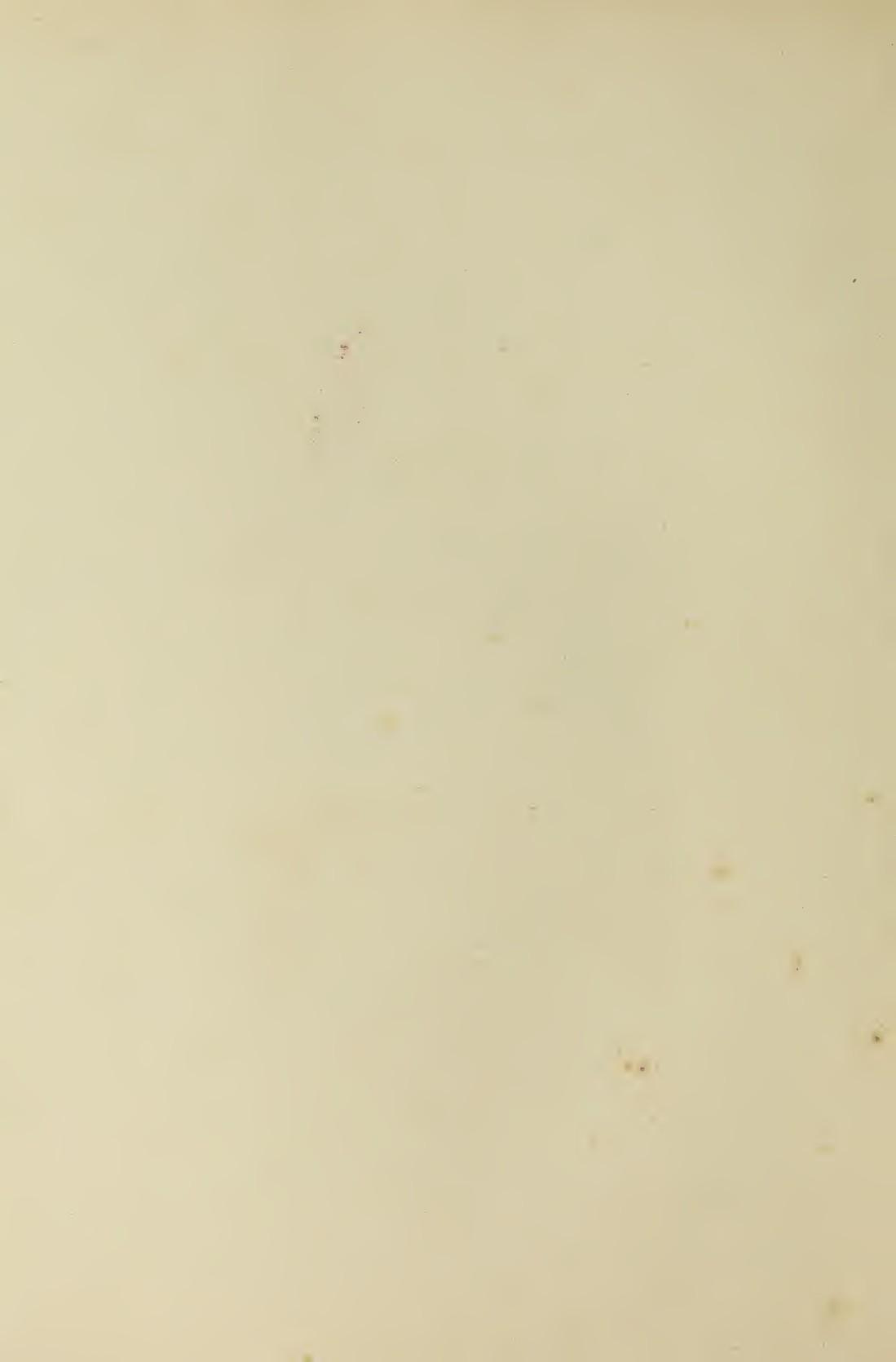
<sup>3</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.," Vol. v., No. 1694.

<sup>4</sup> "Letters relating to the Suppression of the Monasteries" (Camden Society), p. 226.

<sup>5</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.," Vol. xiii., Part i., No. 147.



The Arms of Hugh Cook Faringdon.



that, "though learned, he cannot but instil like persuasions of "marriage, and that would be but occasion of slander, the laws "standing as they do yet." In this dispute, as the subsequent correspondence<sup>1</sup> shows, Faringdon was supported by Cromwell, and won his case, the Bishop being sharply rebuked for his meddlesome interference, which was prompted by a wish to obtain preferment for a *protégé* of his own.

In 1530 Faringdon was one of those spiritual lords who petitioned Pope Clement VII.<sup>2</sup> to grant the divorce of Henry VIII. and Catherine. Indeed, at that time he appears to have been on terms of intimate friendship with the King, who used to call him "his own Abbot"<sup>3</sup>, and exchange New Year gifts with him<sup>4</sup>. Once when the King was hunting in the neighbourhood of Reading, the Abbot sent him presents of fish, probably Kennet trout, and hunting-knives<sup>5</sup>.

On the question of the royal supremacy, Faringdon appears to have been a good Catholic. It is true that in 1536 he signed the articles of faith passed by Convocation at the King's desire, which virtually acknowledged the royal supremacy; but he probably never intended to reject Papal authority in spiritual matters, drawing a distinction, like others in those days, between the Church of England and the Catholic Church. Indeed, a contemporary witness<sup>6</sup> quotes him as having stated that, when sworn to the King's supremacy, he added in his conscience, "of the "temporal Church, but not of the spiritual"; and further, "that "he would pray for the Pope's holiness as long as he lived, and "would once a week say Mass for him, trusting that by such good

<sup>1</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. xiii., Part i., Nos. 264, 571, 572. Cf. also Burnet, "History of the Reformation of the Church of England," edited by Pocock, Vol. iv., p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. iv., Part iii., No. 6513.

<sup>3</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 613.

<sup>4</sup> On January 1, 1532, the King gave him £20 in a white leather purse as a New Year gift, and in 1533 a present of plate ("Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. v., No. 686, and Vol. vi., No. 32).

<sup>5</sup> Reading knives appear to have enjoyed some reputation at this period. In 1530, 1531 and 1532, the Abbot of Reading sent a present of them to the King (Cf. "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. v., pp. 751, 756, 759; and Vol. x., No. 709).

<sup>6</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 613. Gasquet, "Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries," Vol. ii., p. 361.

"prayers the Pope should rise again and have the King's highness  
"with all the whole realm in subjection, as he hath had in time  
"past."

Politically, Faringdon loyally supported the King, for at the time of the great Northern insurrection in 1536 the Abbot of Reading is found on the list of those contributing men to fight against the rebel forces<sup>1</sup>. The town of Reading itself, on the other hand, appears to have had communications with the rebel leader, Robert Aske, for copies of a letter and apparently his proclamation were put into circulation. Amongst others supposed to be in league with the insurgents was John Eynon, a priest of the Church of St. Giles, Reading, and a special friend of Abbot Faringdon. Three years later this priest was executed with the Abbot, but at the time of the rebellion it is clear that there was no suggestion of any complicity on the part of Faringdon, who presided at the examination<sup>2</sup> held in December, 1536, to investigate the matter.

An unfortunate incident happened in 1537, which may have prejudiced Henry VIII. against Faringdon. At this time the nation was strongly opposed to many of the royal schemes, which gave rise to much seething discontent. Meanwhile, the slightest expression of disapprobation was eagerly watched for by the royal spies, ready to construe even idle words into treason. For example, the inadvertent spreading of a rumour of the King's bad health, or, still more, of his death, was liable to be exaggerated into an act of disloyalty.

When, therefore, in December, 1537, a report reached Reading that Henry VIII. was dead, and Faringdon wrote to some neighbours to tell them of the report<sup>3</sup>, this act, so natural in itself, was magnified into a grave charge.

"For think ye," says a contemporary writer<sup>4</sup>, "that the abbat of Reading deserved any less than to be hanged, what time as he wrote letters of the King's death unto divers gentlemen in Berkshire, considering in what a queasy case the realm stood in at that same season? . . . and did enough, if God had not stretched forth his helping hand, to set the realm in as great an

<sup>1</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. xi., No. 580.

<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.*, Vol. xi., No. 1231.

<sup>3</sup> *Loc. cit.*, Vol. xii., Part ii., Nos. 1205 and 1252.

<sup>4</sup> *Loc. cit.*, Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 613.

"uproar as ever it was, and yet the King's majesty, of his royal clemency, forgave him."

Pardon was granted as an act of royal magnanimity, and Faringdon continued in the favour of his King, enjoying all the prestige of a local magnate, of a mitred Abbot, and of a Peer of the realm.

But ere long the first mutterings of the coming storm could be heard, and to him, as to many another in those fateful days, might be applied the words :

δλβίσαι δὲ χρὴ  
βίον τελευτήσαντ' ἐν εὐεστοῖ φίλῃ.

### *The Martyrdom.*

By the end of the year 1536 most of the lesser monasteries had been dissolved, as a result of the report of two Royal Commissioners, known as the "Black Book," which had been laid before Parliament, and had charged the religious houses with all kinds of immorality.

The larger houses, which had, on the whole, been better conducted, remained intact, for the Act of 1536 only contemplated their passing into the King's hands in the case of voluntary surrender.

Even the attainer of an Abbot for treason had not hitherto involved the confiscation of the Abbey over which the attainted superior ruled. But after the Northern rebellion had been subdued, this victory was used as a pretext for further suppressions, and the King determined to confiscate the property of a corporation, where its head had been attainted of treason. This was not, strictly speaking, legal<sup>1</sup>. But in order to meet such cases, a clause was inserted in the Act of April, 1539, covering the illegal suppression of the greater monasteries, and granting to the King all "Abbathies, " "Priories etc., which hereafter shall happen to be dissolved, " suppressed, renounced, relinquished, forfeited, given up or come "unto the King's Highness." There is also a parenthesis referring to such others as "shall happen to come to the King's Highness by Attainder or Attainders of Treason."

<sup>1</sup> Even Burnet writes: "But how justly soever these Abbots were attainted, the seizing on their Abbey-lands, pursuant to those attainders, was thought a great stretch of law; since the offence of an ecclesiastical incumbent is a personal thing, and cannot prejudice the Church" ("History of the Reformation of the Church of England," edited by Pocock, Vol. i., p. 382).

This Act passed the House of Lords without protest on the part of any of the Abbots, although those of Glastonbury, Colchester and Reading, and others were present. It seems clear, therefore, that at this period there was no suspicion of the storm that was so soon to overwhelm these three great prelates, although the Act dealt with the very attainder for treason under which, a few months later, they were executed.

From notes in Thomas Cromwell's own handwriting, there can be little doubt that between the passing of the Act in April, 1539, and the following September, these three Abbots had been sounded as to whether they would voluntarily surrender their monasteries. But as neither promises of generous treatment nor threats of violence were of any avail, they were accused<sup>1</sup> of loyalty to the Holy See, and thus denying the King's supremacy. This was regarded as equivalent to high treason.

The venerable Hugh Faringdon was specially loyal to the Vicar of Christ, declaring that he would "never in his heart accept "the King's supremacy, but week by week would offer the holy "sacrifice on behalf of the Bishop of Rome, and call him Pope till "his dying day."

This man, from whose hands Thomas Cromwell, the King's vicegerent, had recently received the office of High Steward of Reading, was now marked as a victim in the following offhand words : "Hang the Abbot of Reading."

While Cromwell was preparing his case against the Abbot, another was on the look-out for a share of the rich spoils to be derived from Reading Abbey. This was Sir William Penizon, who actually resorted to bribery to gain his purpose. In the Record Office may still be seen his letter asking for the receivership of the Abbey. "I present," he writes to Cromwell on August 15, "unto "your lordship a diamond<sup>2</sup> set in a slender gold ring, meet to be "set in the breast of a George," which, though not of the best, he

<sup>1</sup> The links in the chain of documentary evidence are somewhat imperfect, but Gasquet ("Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries," Vol. ii., pp. 348, 368; and "The last Abbot of Glastonbury and his Companions") quotes such authority as remains. Free use has been made of these works in the following account of Faringdon's execution. The Right Rev. F. Aidan Gasquet, O.S.B., D.D., Abbot-President of the English Benedictine Congregation, was in 1900 requested by that Congregation to assume the description of "Titular Abbot of Reading."

<sup>2</sup> "Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.," Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 49.

desires Cromwell to accept, reminding him that he “ moved Cromwell not long agone of the dissolution of Reading Abbey ”; and that “ the Abbot, preparing for the same, sells sheep, corn, wood, “ etc., to the disadvantage of the King, and partly also of the “ farmer.”

As a Peer of the Realm, Faringdon ought to have been arraigned for treason before Parliament, but no trial under attainder took place, and his execution was over, before Parliament came together. As a matter of fact, no proper trial<sup>1</sup> of any kind took place, and he was condemned to the death of a traitor as the result of secret inquisitions in the Tower by a tribunal that had no jurisdiction. Indeed, there is evidence that Cromwell, acting as “ prosecutor, judge and “ jury,” had determined on the Abbot’s death before he left the prison, for in Cromwell’s “ Remembrances,” written down with his own hand, we read : “ The Abbot Redyng (*sic*) to “ be sent down to be tried *and executed* at Redyng with his “ complices<sup>2</sup>,” proving that the ultimate issue had been determined beforehand.

Brought down from the Tower to Reading, on his last tragic journey, Faringdon underwent in his own hall of justice what was nothing more than a travesty of justice. But even the prospect of a felon’s death could not daunt his heroism<sup>3</sup>. True to his conscience, he chose death rather than dishonour ; and as we look back through the centuries at the man who laid down his life, a martyr for the cause which he believed to be just, who does not feel a thrill of admiration ?

A traitor’s death was accompanied by every ignominy. First came the stretching of the limbs on a hurdle, which was dragged about the town by a horse. Then the last pathetic scene, when Faringdon, standing before the gateway of his stately Abbey, with the rope about his neck, and on the verge of eternity, addressed the crowd that had flocked to witness the execution of the great lord Abbot.

<sup>1</sup> The date of the arrest is uncertain, but probably the Abbot was in the Tower by September 17, 1539 (“ Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.,” Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 187).

<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.*, Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 399.

<sup>3</sup> Hugh Faringdon used as his motto the words from the *Te Deum* “ In te Domine speravi.”

He tells them of the cause<sup>1</sup> for which “he and his companions “were to die, not fearing openly to profess that which Henry’s “laws made it treason to hold—fidelity to the See of Rome, which “he declared was but the common faith of those who had the best “right to know what was the true teaching of the English “Church.”

The Abbot’s chief counsellor, John Eynon<sup>2</sup>, or Onyon, who had been particularly vehement in his protestations of innocence, also spoke, admitting his so-called treason, begging the prayers of the bystanders for his soul, and craving the King’s forgiveness, if in aught he had offended. This over, the sentence of hanging<sup>3</sup>, with its barbarous accessories<sup>4</sup>, was carried out upon

<sup>1</sup> Two different explanations of Faringdon’s execution have been given. The above account is mainly based on a document recently discovered in the Record Office, and abstracted in the “Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.,” Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 613. This document gives what is practically Faringdon’s dying declaration at the foot of the scaffold. But on the other hand may be quoted Froude, who (“History of England,” Vol. iii., p. 241), speaking of the Abbot of Glastonbury, writes: “The Abbot was placed in charge of a guard and sent to London to the Tower to be examined by Cromwell himself, when it was discovered that both he and the Abbot of Reading had supplied the northern insurgents with money.” The only authority for this statement appears to be a pamphlet entitled “The Pilgrim, A Dialogue on the Life and Actions of King Henry VIII.” (written in 1546, by William Thomas, Clerk of the Council to Edward VI., and edited by J. A. Froude in 1861), p. 65. Burnet also writes: “The Abbots of Glastonbury and Reading . . . seeing the storm like to break out on themselves, sent a great deal of the plate and money that they had in their house to the rebels in the north; which being afterwards discovered, they were attainted of high treason a year after this” (“History of the Reformation of the Church of England,” ed. by Pocock, Vol. i., p. 380). Further references may be found in “Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.,” Vol. xv., No. 259, and No. 269; and “Encyclopædia Britannica,” Vol. viii., p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> “Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.,” Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 613. This name has been variously spelt, but was really Eynon (*Cf.* Gasquet, “The Abbot of Glastonbury and his Companions,” p. 154). Both Abbot Faringdon and his two fellow-sufferers are included amongst the English martyrs, beatified or venerable, who suffered death in England for the Catholic Faith and for the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff (*Cf.* the Decree of Beatification published by the Roman Congregation of Rites, May 13, 1895).

<sup>3</sup> The date was probably November 15, 1539, although some authorities give November 14. Mrs. Climenson (“History of Shiplake,” p. 183) states that the gallows, 40 feet high, were erected on what is now the site of the Roman Catholic Church in the Forbury.

<sup>4</sup> In those days of refined cruelty a condemned traitor was usually hung from the gallows, cut down while still alive and disembowelled, the body being then cut

Abbot Faringdon and the two monks, John Eynon and John Rugg. Thus the co-workers during life were linked in death.

As for the monks, they were expelled from their well-beloved sanctuary, and cast adrift in the world. There is no record in the Books of the Augmentation Office of any pension<sup>1</sup> being granted even to those monks who, from infirmity or old age, were incapable of earning their livelihood. Not until fifteen years later, in the 2nd and 3rd of Philip and Mary, were thirteen pensions and one annuity given to monks who were still alive and made application. The following are the names of the recipients and the amounts granted<sup>2</sup>:

				Per annum.
Annuity	...	...	Johannis Jennyns	iiij <i>li.</i>
			Johannis Fycas	cs.
			Johannis Wright	cs.
			Johannis Harper	cs.
			Johannis Myles	cs.
			Elyzei Burges	<i>vili.</i>
			Johannis Turner	cs.
Pensions	...	...	Philippi Mathewe	cs.
			Lucae Whitehorne	cs.
			Thomae Taylor	cs.
			Roberti Raynes	iiij <i>li.</i> vis. viij <i>d.</i>
			Johannis Southe	lxvis. viij <i>d.</i>
			Ricardi Purser	xls.
			Ricardi Butts	xls.

£61 13 4

Thus falls the curtain on the closing scene of a famous monastic drama. For over four centuries Reading Abbey had been the home of active benevolence and of spiritual worship. "Ever at "the sacred gates sat Mercy, pouring out relief from a never- "failing store to the poor and suffering; ever within the sacred

in pieces. In the case of Faringdon the body is said to have been left "rotting on a gibbet near his Abbey Gate" ("Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.", 1540, No. 259).

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Moyle, one of the surveyors of Crown lands, had in a letter to Cromwell suggested £230 a year for pensions ("Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.", Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 136).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Cardinal Pole's Pension Book, fol. 25, in Vol. xxxi. of the Q. R. Miscell. Books (R.O.).

"aisles the voices of holy men were pealing heavenwards in intercession for the sins of mankind<sup>1</sup>."

Doubtless during its long history there were at times abuses, superstitious practices and corruptions, such as were rife amongst religious houses ; and on other pages mention is made of mismanaged treasury, and of almoner and Abbot negligent of their duty. Moreover the development of civic independence in Reading was sadly thwarted by the ecclesiastical dominion of the monastery, as will be told in the next Chapter. But, speaking generally, history records little that is discreditable, and Reading will hold in everlasting remembrance that ancient home of religion and learning, whose past is inextricably interwoven with her own.

<sup>1</sup> Froude, "The Dissolution of the Monasteries" ("Short Studies," Vol. i., p. 417).





## Chapter v.

### *The Struggle between the Abbot and the Guild Merchant.*

**H**OR two hundred and fifty years raged a bitter struggle between the Guild Merchant of Reading and the ecclesiastical Corporation, over which ruled that *grand Seigneur* “my Lord of Reading,” and the story of the struggle is of singular interest as illustrating the slow progress from serfdom to imperfect liberty made by a town subject to a monastery. A brief historical retrospect will explain the origin of the strife.

At the time of the Conquest Reading was a small burgh (or borough) of about thirty homesteads, and belonged directly to the Crown, forming, in fact, a part of the national property. In the words of Domesday Book, “The King holds Reading in demesne,” and this relationship conferred on the population concerned special privileges and an exemption from certain public burdens<sup>1</sup>. When, however, in 1121 King Henry I. founded his Abbey and annexed Reading to it, the burgh was dethroned from the favoured position previously occupied, and henceforward owed fealty to the monastery instead of to the Crown.

For many a year the borough lay absolutely at the mercy of the Abbot. He owned its streams, its fisheries, its mills, its very

<sup>1</sup> Vinogradoff, “Villainage in England,” p. 92.

soil. He did as he chose with the market, he controlled the trade, and supervised the cloth manufacture. He appointed the Warden of the Guild (*Custos Gilde Mercande*, afterwards the Mayor), as well as its inferior officers<sup>1</sup>. Every guildsman or gildanus paid him a yearly tax of 5d., called *chepyn-gavell*<sup>2</sup>, for the right of buying or selling in the borough, while the admission of new members into the guild was subject to his veto. From a burgher's son was levied an entrance fee of 4s., and from a non-freeman (or foreigner) one half the fine paid as entrance fee. Fines destined for the Abbot's treasury were imposed for every breach of the law, the entire administration of justice being monopolized in his hands. In brief, the magisterial authority of the Warden was nominal when compared with that of the Abbot, before whom alone might be borne the symbols of supremacy, and who merely allowed the Warden to have two tipped staves carried before him on state occasions by the Abbot's bailiffs.

For the first hundred years after the foundation of the monastery the Abbot appears to have enjoyed unquestioned supremacy, and to have regarded the Merchant Guild<sup>3</sup> with favour, any privileges acquired by the latter being probably purchased<sup>4</sup> from the early Abbots, who, at the cost of a strip of parchment, were able to increase their revenue and at the same time promote the material prosperity of the town.

But in the reign of Henry III. broke out a revolt against the dominion of the Abbey, and a struggle, not unaccompanied by violence<sup>5</sup>, for at least an instalment of that civic independence which other towns were enjoying<sup>6</sup>. The Abbot, on the one part,

<sup>1</sup> Guilding, "Records of the Borough of Reading," Vol. i., p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Chepyn-gavell, or market-tax, from *chēpinge* (O.E. *cēping*, *cēaping*, *cēapung*), act of buying, market; and *gavel* (O.E. *gafol*, *gaful*, *gafel*), tribute, tax. "The Middle-English Dictionary" (twelfth to fifteenth century) by Stratmann, ed. by Bradley.

<sup>3</sup> There appear to have been originally five separate companies of traders, who subsequently amalgamated for common purposes, acquired privileges and property, and eventually formed the Guild Merchant (Historical MSS. Commission, Vol. xi., Appendix, Part vii., p. 224; and Ditchfield, "The Guilds of Reading," p. 4).

<sup>4</sup> Guilding, "Notable Events in the Municipal History of Reading," p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> In 1244 occurred a disturbance at Reading in consequence of certain persons being killed by the servants of the Abbey, but what the origin of the disturbance was is not stated ("Annales de Theokesberia," Rolls Series, p. 134).

<sup>6</sup> It is interesting to compare the "Battle for Freedom" as waged by a town,

relied on the various Charters granted by King Henry I. and his successors, as evidence of his prerogatives and jurisdiction. The burghers, on the other part, with self-conscious dignity, pleaded still more ancient privileges and rights of self-government, dating, they maintained, from the reign of Edward the Confessor and the days when Reading was a royal borough.

By the year 1253 the dispute had grown so fierce that the burghers actually "lay in wait day and night for the Abbot's 'bailiffs,'" and "assaulted them in the execution of their office." For this offence the townsmen were cited into the Court of King's Bench, and required to justify the privileges they claimed as members of the Guild.

Eventually peace was restored by a precept from King Henry III. to the Sheriff of Berks, disallowing the claims of the burgesses and upholding the supreme authority of the Abbot, the precept being followed by a Charter of Incorporation for their Guild, which the burghers succeeded in obtaining from King Henry III. at Portsmouth. The provisions of this Guild Charter<sup>1</sup> of 1253 are as follows :

"Henry, by the grace of God, King of England etc., to all "archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, barons etc., greeting. Know "ye that we will, and command for ourself and our heirs, that all the "burgesses of Reading *who belong to the Guild Merchant in* "Reading may be for ever free from all shires and hundred courts, "and from all pleas, complaints, tolls, passages, ways, carriage "ways, and that they may buy and sell wheresoever they will "throughout all England, without paying toll, and no one may "disturb them under forfeiture of 10 marks."

By this Charter, which is of great importance in the municipal history of Reading, privileges which hitherto had been enjoyed on sufferance, now receive a complete legal sanction.

But in the following year (1254) there appear to have been further quarrels, the matters in dispute being laid before the Court of King's Bench at Westminster. The burghers, on their part, accused the Abbot of having (1) dissolved the Guild Merchant ;

such as Reading, dependent on an abbey, with that waged by towns on Royal demesne or feudal estates (Mrs. Green, "Town Life in the Fifteenth Century," Vol. i., Chaps. vii.-ix.).

<sup>1</sup> Ditchfield, "The Guilds of Reading," p 7.

(2) compelled them to plead in his court instead of in their own Guild Hall; (3) changed the site of the Corn Market; and (4) exacted services which he had no right to demand. The Abbot, on his part, complained (1) of the contumacious conduct of the burghers, who had driven out and beaten his bailiff and other officers; (2) that the payment of chepyn-gavell had been refused; and (3) that the privileges conferred by the Abbey Charters had been violated.

As a result a "Final and endly concord<sup>1</sup>" was drawn up, by which the burghers secured the right to hold their market in its accustomed place, to own their common Guild Hall, and to maintain their Guild Merchant as of old. In return for this, amongst other concessions, the burgesses acknowledged the Abbot's right to select one of the guildsmen to be the Custos Gilde or Mayor<sup>2</sup>, who should take an oath of fidelity to the burgesses as well as to the Abbot. Moreover, the latter might still tallage the town at certain times, and his bailiffs hold their courts in the Guild Hall, and fine the burgesses any reasonable sum for the benefit of the Abbot's treasury.

As this agreement left the control of local government, as well as of trade, in the hands of the Abbot, it is no wonder that in time the restless townsfolk began to clamour for further liberty. Guilding<sup>3</sup> suggests that they were seeking to escape from the jurisdiction of the Abbot's Manorial Court (under the Guild Charter of Henry III., exempting them from all pleas). At any rate, in the Charter of Edward III., dated 1344 (which was an *Inspeximus* of that of Henry III.), the privilege hitherto enjoyed by the burgesses of being "quit from all pleas" was withdrawn, probably at the instance of the Abbot, to prevent the Guild from evading his jurisdiction.

Thereupon the traditional feud broke out afresh, and matters came to a crisis in 1351, the mode of election of constables now being the chief point in dispute. The Mayor and burgesses declared that the Abbot had no rights in the matter, and actually

<sup>1</sup> Guilding, "Records of the Borough of Reading," Vol. i., p. 280; Historical MSS. Commission, Vol. xi., Appendix, Part vii., p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> The list of Mayors given by Macray (Historical MSS. Commission, Vol. xi., Appendix, Part vii., p. 227) begins in 1324 (18 Edward II.).

<sup>3</sup> Reading Literary and Scientific Society, 1891, p. 8.

refused to obey a constable appointed by the Abbot's steward. They further pleaded that they had been accustomed time out of mind to elect a proper and able person to be Mayor of the town, that they had a Guild Merchant, and that the Mayor aforesaid was accustomed to exercise jurisdiction over the burgesses of the town.

This agitation continued for many years, the fortunes of the contending parties alternating from time to time. But eventually the question was settled in favour of the town, at any rate for the moment, since we read that in 1417 the Mayor, Robert Morys, elected two constables in the hall of the Guild Merchant, and that these constables were admitted to office by one of the justices of the peace. In 1420 the burghers proceeded to erect a new Guild Hall close to the Hallowed Brook, but when a few years later they went on to build a new slaughter-house for butchers living outside the town, the Abbot saw in it an attempt to limit his own market profits, seized the shambles in 1430<sup>1</sup>, and denied the right of the burgesses to hold them<sup>2</sup>.

But in spite of occasional rebuffs the Merchant Guild was gradually improving its status and becoming recognised as the symbol of a common municipal life, and the safeguard of municipal freedom. The Mayor, although still appointed by the Abbot, identified himself more and more with the representatives of the town, and led the revolt against the Abbey.

Various municipal Charters<sup>3</sup>, too, were obtained about this time, showing that the Abbot's jurisdiction was being restricted, and the privileges of the Merchant Guild confirmed. Thus Henry VI. gave permission to the Mayor to have a mace carried before him, and in 1459 the mace was actually bought.

<sup>1</sup> Gross, "The Gild Merchant," Vol. ii., p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Green, "Town Life in the Fifteenth Century," Vol. i., p. 280, contrasts the civic freedom of Nottingham, a town on royal demesne which received its Charter in 1200 (*Cf.* Stubbs, "Select Charters," p. 308), with the ecclesiastical bondage of Reading: "A dozen generations of Nottingham burghers had been ordering their own market, taking the rents of their butcheries and fish stalls and storage rooms, supervising their wool traders and mercers, and admitting new burgesses to their company by common consent, while the men of Reading were still trying in vain every means by which they might win like privileges from the Abbot who owned the town."

<sup>3</sup> For a summary of these Charters, *cf.* Guilding, "Reading Literary and Scientific Society," 1891, p. 7.

This honour, however, was too great to be enjoyed for long, and soon afterwards the King wrote a letter to the Mayor revoking the privilege, on the ground that "hit is contrarie to the franchise "and libertees of our said church and monasterie, by our noble "aunciesterees graunted and by us confirmed, you to be called or "bere other in name or in signe other wise than as keeper of the "Gilde of Reding, admitted by the abbot of our said monasterie, "and not by us, for to have any mase, or eny other signe of officer "or office to be born by you or any other man with in the said "town and franchisse of Reding. Savyng oonly two tipped staffs "to be born by the baylif of the abbot of oure said monasterie, "graunted and yeven to the abbot and convent of the same our "monasterie at the first foundac'on thereof<sup>1</sup>."

Some years later (in 1480) the payment to the Abbot of chepyn-gavell was abolished, the money henceforth going into the town chest.

In 1487 was granted by King Henry VII. an important Guild Charter, *Majori et Burgensibus Radingiæ*, this being the first Charter in which the Mayor is alluded to, a fact which shows the influential position he had now acquired. The Charter further conceded the right of electing two Sergeants-at-Mace to attend upon the Mayor of the town, a privilege that had been refused by King Henry VI., and granted the Mayor the right to the survey and correction of all the men employed in the cloth trade, provided that the Abbot received "the fines, pains, forfeitures, "and all other profits arising from such correction." Lastly, the Mayor and burgesses were not to be summoned on Assize, Juries, Attaints, Recognitions or Inquisitions before Justices of Assize and Gaol Delivery, Justices of the Peace, or other Justices outside the borough.

This and other provisions of the Charter show what great strides had been made in the independent authority of the municipal body, which at length is allowed to enjoy some fruits of a hard-won victory<sup>2</sup>. But even now peace was not to last long, for a little later the Abbot absolutely refused for a period of three

<sup>1</sup> Harl. MS., 1708, fol. 162b.

<sup>2</sup> In 1492 was given the first dinner to the Mayor, costing only ten shillings altogether.

or four years to appoint any “maister of the Gilde, otherwise “called the Mayre<sup>1</sup>,” and took upon himself to admit “simple and “perjured persons to the office of constable, who in nothing “regarded the good rule of the town.” The result was that “mysruled people dayly encresed and contynued, as carders, disers, “hasardes, vacabonds, and mony oder unlawfull gamys were used “as wele by nyght as by day.”

This roused the wrath of the burgesses, who, in 1498, elected one Richard Cleche as Mayor, and he on his part “desired certain “burgesses to help to see such misruled people punished . . . until “matters were settled with the Abbot.”

In 1500, however, the inhabitants were again defeated in their efforts to elect their Mayor<sup>2</sup>, and a fresh appeal was made to the judgment of King’s Court.

In this appeal the Abbot triumphed, and in 1507, when a decree<sup>3</sup> was passed by the Justices of the Common Pleas, declaring the Mayor and burgesses of the Guild Merchant to be corporate, the only power granted is that “the Burgeses of the seide Gylde “shalle name and present iij<sup>e</sup> good and able Burgeses of the seid “Gylde to the seid Abbot yerely in the fest of Seynt Mychaelle “th’ Archaungell; . . . and in the same Monastery desyer and “pray the same Abbot, if he be present, or in his seide absens the “Pryour, Chamberer<sup>4</sup> or Subchamberer, to chose and admytt one “of the same iij<sup>e</sup> persones to be Keper of the seid Gylde.” The two constables and the ten wardmen of the five wards might indeed be elected by the Mayor and burgesses, but they must be sworn in before the Abbot.

This brief history of a struggle extending over two hundred and fifty years brings us almost down to the dissolution of the Abbey, and illustrates how the galling yoke of a powerful ecclesiastical corporation hampered the development of liberty and of the rights of self-government. But while it is true that the burghers failed to release themselves from the grip of their feudal

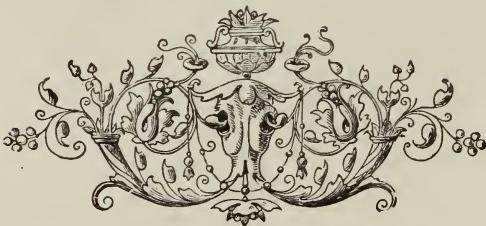
<sup>1</sup> Historical MSS. Commission, Vol. xi., Appendix, Part vii., p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> A few years later Bishop Shaxton actually refers to the Mayor of Reading as “the Abbot’s Mayor,” thus showing how recognised the dependence was (“Letters and Papers, Henry VIII.,” Vol. xiii., Part i., No. 571).

<sup>3</sup> Guilding, “Records of the Borough of Reading,” Vol. i., p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* Chamberlain.

lord, yet some measure of success had been gained, and many of the cherished prerogatives granted to the Abbey at the time of its foundation had been lost during the strife. But it was not until the Abbey had been dissolved and the voice of the Abbot was silenced in death, that the burgesses obtained from King Henry VIII. those privileges so long striven for. Then at length dawns the day of liberty, and in the first Charter of Incorporation of 1542 the Mayor and burgesses are constituted the governing body of the town, with full executive authority and jurisdiction.





## Chapter vi.

### *The Establishment of the Abbey.*



THE establishment of the Abbey consisted of the Abbot, the Prior and other officers of the monks, of lay brethren and of servants, "the observance of "the order of Cluny"<sup>1</sup> being instituted by the seven brethren who, with Peter their Prior, came over from Cluny for the purpose in 1121.

The famous Benedictine Abbey of Cluny<sup>2</sup> (Fig. XI.), near Mâcon, was founded in 910 by William IX., surnamed the Pious, Duke of Aquitaine, and endowed with his entire possessions. Bernon, Abbot of Gigny, was appointed the first Abbot, and, under his guidance and that of his successors, Cluny ere long attained a degree of influence and prosperity unequalled by any monastic institution of the Middle Ages. Popes received in it their early training, Kings made it their refuge, while its Abbots acquired great prestige in the councils of Church and State.

An important event in the history of Cluny was the reformation of the Benedictine Order, carried out more especially during the abbacy of the saintly Peter the Venerable (1122-1158), as a result of which Cluny became the head of a large number of dependent houses, subject to one great central house, the Abbot

<sup>1</sup> Cf. British Museum, Royal MSS. 8 E. xviii.

<sup>2</sup> The arms of the Abbey of Cluny shown in Fig. XI. were: Gules, two keys in saltire wards in chief or, in front of a sword in pale proper, the hilt in base (Woodward, "Ecclesiastical Heraldry," p. 412; Plate xxii., 2).

of which retained authority over the other houses. This reformation, which was decided upon at a general chapter attended by 200 Priors<sup>1</sup> of the Order, fundamentally modified what had hitherto been an essential feature of the Benedictine constitution, viz., the right of each house to govern itself and elect its own Abbot, and in its place established the principle of one great central monastery with dependencies spread over many lands.

The first Cluniac monastery in England was that of St. Pancras, founded at Lewes in 1077 by William de Warenne, Earl of Surrey, and thus Lewes came to be regarded as the headquarters of the Cluniacs in this country, its Prior being usually appointed the Abbot of Cluny's vicar-general over the whole Order in England and Scotland. Ere long other foundations sprang up, including those of Thetford in Norfolk, of St. Peter and St. Paul of Montacute in Somerset, of Wenlock in Shropshire, and of Bermondsey in Surrey<sup>2</sup>. But all of these were eclipsed by the foundation of Reading Abbey in 1121.

In these English monasteries the stricter code of the Cluniacs was doubtless observed, special stress being laid on fasting and silence, as well as on liturgical splendour. But the peculiar mode of government which characterized most Cluniac foundations was not always adopted in England, and Reading Abbey retained its local independence<sup>3</sup>, in harmony with the old Benedictine principle of family autonomy<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Duckett, "Charters and Records of Cluni," Vol. i., p. 23.

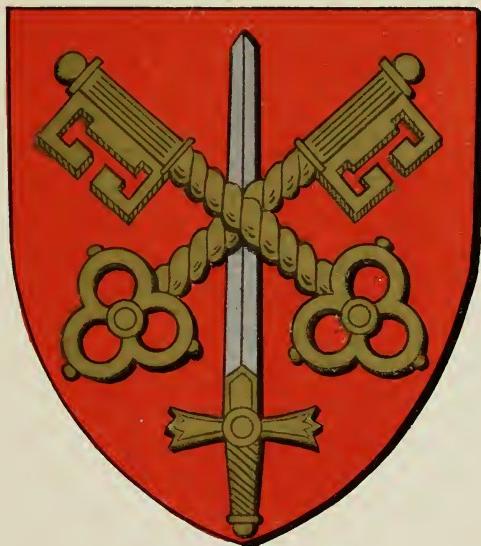
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. i., p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> The Foundation Charter directs that, on the death of an Abbot, the possession of the monastery, with its rights and privileges, should remain in the power and disposal of the Prior and monks.

<sup>4</sup> On this point the following extract from a private letter received from Monsieur Léopold Delisle, editor of "Inventaire des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale ; Fonds de Cluni," is of interest :

"Il est constant que des moines de Cluni furent appelés par le roi Henri I. pour introduire à Reading les institutions de Cluni, qui passaient alors pour le type le plus parfait des pratiques de la vie monastique d'après la règle de Saint Benoît. Mais il ne s'ensuit pas que l'abbaye anglaise ait été mise sous la juridiction de Cluni. Je ne vois pas que les visiteurs de Cluni aient jamais mis le pied à Reading, ni que les abbés de Reading aient été convoqués aux chapitres généraux.

"Le tableau général des membres de la grande famille de Cluni, dressé au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, ne comprend pas l'abbaye de Reading. Ce même tableau indique les maisons anglaises soumises au prieuré de Lewes. Reading n'y figure pas. Vous pouvez le voir en consultant la *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis*, Col. 1748."



The Arms of the Abbey of Cluny.

FIG. XI.



A further peculiarity is the fact that the Cluniac house at Reading is the only one in England dignified from the time of its foundation with the title of Abbey, the other houses being called Priories; even Bermondsey only became an Abbey in 1399, more than 300 years after its foundation. The high rank assumed by Reading from the start is also shown by the fact that its first two Abbots were promoted to it from Lewes, where they had been Priors of St. Pancras.

But during its later history Reading ceased to be regarded as Cluniac, and is generally classed among the Benedictine houses, its Abbot taking part in the triennial Chapters, which were enjoined by the fourth General Council of Lateran in 1215<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, the fifth of these Chapters<sup>2</sup> appears to have been held at Reading in 1228, under the presidency of the Abbots of Westminster and Peterborough. But for nearly a century longer the designation Cluniac is occasionally applied, and even the Pope in 1309 addresses a letter<sup>3</sup> to "the Abbot and convent of the Cluniac Monastery of 'Reading.'

### I.—*The Abbot.*

The Abbot of Reading was a mitred Abbot<sup>4</sup> as well as a Parliamentary baron, and in that capacity had a place on the roll of English peers and figured in State pageants.

<sup>1</sup> Taunton, "Black Monks of St. Benedict," Vol. i., pp. 35, 38. Dugdale, "Monasticon" (1846), Vol. i., pp. l, li. In 1294 the Abbot of Redinges is definitely included amongst the priors and abbots of the Benedictine Order ("Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward I.", 1292-1301, Rolls Series, p. 97). Other Cluniac houses, e.g. Daventry and Monk Bretton, also joined the General Chapters of Benedictines (*Cf.* Gasquet, "Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries," Vol. ii., p. 544).

<sup>2</sup> This is an inference from the appointment of the next place of meeting made at the Chapter of 1225 (*Cf.* *Downsider Review*, Vol. v., p. 59; Reyner, "Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia," Vol. ii., p. 38; Vol. iii., pp. 58, 98). There is some reason for thinking that a second Chapter was held at Reading between 1271 and 1279.

<sup>3</sup> "Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland—Papal Letters," Vol. ii., p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> Mitred abbots were abbots who had received from the Pope the license to wear the mitre and other vestments proper to the episcopal office (Stubbs, "Const. Hist.," Vol. iii., p. 460). This license appears to have been granted on September 6, 1288, when the Pope decreed that the Abbot of Reading and his successors "may use the mitre, ring, gloves, dalmatic, tunicle and sandals, according to the indult of Clement III.; and this both within the monastery on solemn days, and in pro-

An illuminated parchment roll is extant in the Bodleian Library<sup>1</sup> showing the procession of Abbots, Bishops and Temporal Peers to "The Parlement holden at Westm' the iiiith: day off February, the thride yere off oure Soveraigne lord Kyng Henry VIII<sup>th</sup>." Above each peer are painted his armorial achievements, and the figures are arranged according to the precedence of the estates. On this roll John Thorne (II.), then Abbot of Reading, ranks tenth<sup>2</sup> amongst the Abbots, and the accompanying illustration of a portion of the roll (Fig. XII.) gives some idea of the caps and robes worn by Spiritual Peers in those days.

The right of electing the Abbot was vested in the Prior and monks, according to the Foundation Charter, but the assent of the Crown<sup>3</sup> and the confirmation of the Bishop<sup>4</sup> of the diocese were

cessions and episcopal synods" ("Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland—Papal Letters," Vol. i., p. 495). The other mitred abbots in England were those of Abingdon, St. Albans, Bardney, Battle, Bury St. Edmund's, St. Augustine's Canterbury, Colchester, Croyland, Evesham, Glastonbury, Gloucester, St. Benet's Hulme, Hyde, Malmesbury, Peterborough, Ramsey-Selby, Shrewsbury, Tavistock, Thorney, Westminster, Winchcombe, St. Mary's York.

<sup>1</sup> Ashmole Rolls, No. 45. In the British Museum (Add. MSS. 22,306) is a copy of this roll, which is described in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1832 (Vol. cii., Part i., p. 524; Part ii., p. 200).

<sup>2</sup> Sir Henry Englefield (*Archæologia*, Vol. vi., p. 61) states that the Abbot of Reading took precedence after the Abbots of Glastonbury and St. Albans. But it is probable that no such definite order was observed. Thus in the "Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military Summons" (edited by Palgrave, 1827), the Abbot of Reading is sometimes placed as high as fifth, but usually much lower. In the "Remembrance for the Interment of the most Christian Princess, Elizabeth, Queen of England, wife of Henry VII." (British Museum, MSS. Stowe, 583, folio 31), the Abbot of Reading comes first amongst the Abbots, being followed by those of St. Albans, Winchcombe and Stratford. In the Articles of Faith (British Museum, Cotton. MSS., Cleopatra E. 5) under Convocation 28 Henry VIII. the following is the order of signatures: St. Albans, Westminster, Bury St. Edmunds, Glastonbury, Reading. Further illustrations of the relative precedence accorded to abbots will be found in Leland's "Collectanea de Rebus Britannicis" (1774), Vol. iv., pp. 305, 306; "Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII.," Vol. ii., Part i., No. 1153; Vol. vii., No. 391; Vol. xii., Part ii., No. 1060.

<sup>3</sup> In the "Calendar of Patent Rolls of the time of Edward I.," 1292-1301 (Rolls Series), p. 409, is found the "Signification to W. Bishop of Salisbury of the royal assent to the election of William de Sutton, chamberlain of Reading, to be abbot."

<sup>4</sup> An interesting petition (1226) to the Bishop of Sarum, presenting the Abbot-elect for confirmation and benediction, and signed by the prior, precentor,



FIG. XII.—Procession of Abbots to Parliament.



necessary before the election was valid. Some days later the temporalities<sup>1</sup> of the Abbey were handed over to the new Abbot. The office was held for life, except in the case of grave misconduct.

The ceremony of admission was probably similar to that elsewhere, and is thus described by the consuetudinary of the neighbouring Abbey of Abingdon<sup>2</sup>. The newly elected Abbot, after putting off his shoes at the door of the Church, proceeded barefoot to meet the members of the monastery, who advanced in a procession to meet him. After walking up the nave, he knelt and prayed on the topmost step of the entrance to the choir, into which he was introduced by the bishop or the bishop's commissary, and placed in his stall. The monks, then kneeling, gave him the kiss of peace on the hand, and, rising, on the mouth, the Abbot holding his staff of office. He then put on his shoes in the vestry and held a chapter, the bishop or his commissary preaching a suitable sermon.

Both without and within the Abbey did he wield extensive powers.

(a) *Outside the Abbey.*

In his capacity of feudal baron, the Abbot was supreme ruler in his own domain, and had the power of judging bondmen and villains, goods and chattels. These rights extended over Reading and the neighbouring district, and included judicial power in all cases of forfeiture, assault, robbery, theft, murder and breach of the peace, to as full an extent as belonged to the monarch.

If the Abbot should delay doing justice, the King might interpose, yet only so as not to infringe the liberties of the Abbey. Some of these rights were withdrawn during the civil wars of Stephen and Henry II., but they were restored by King John, and confirmed in the Exchequer in the twelfth year of his reign. The

sub-prior, sacrista, custos operum and others, will be found in "Charters and Documents illustrating the History of Salisbury" (Rolls Series), p. 171.

<sup>1</sup> In the "Calendar of Patent Rolls of Richard II.," 1377-1381 (Rolls Series), p. 193, is given the "Mandate to Gilbert Wace, escheator in the counties of Oxford and Berks, to restore the temporalities of the Abbey of Radyng to Richard Yateleye, monk thereof, abbot elect and confirmed."

<sup>2</sup> "Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon" (Rolls Series), Vol. ii., p. 336.

itinerant justices sat in the Abbot's own court, and his seneschal or bailiff sat with them, as appears by a precept of Henry III.

There are numerous instances in which the Abbot of Reading claimed and exercised judicial authority. Thus, on one notable occasion, a William Brun found in the act of hunting in Windsor Forest was pursued to Reading and imprisoned by the Abbot, who refused to deliver him up to Galfridus de Pickford, constable of Windsor Castle, a refusal which was upheld by Edward I.

Again, in a case of murder Edward I. issued a precept to the Abbot to deliver up the criminals taken at Reading to the Sheriff of the county, but with the express provision that this case should not form a precedent for the future.

Another privilege was that of creating knights<sup>1</sup>, whether clerks or laymen, a privilege which is all the more surprising, as King Henry I. had at the Council of London in 1102<sup>2</sup> forbidden Abbots to make knights. But a stipulation was that the Abbot should only admit such as were of mature age and discreet judgment.

<sup>1</sup> There is some doubt as to the meaning of the clause "nec faciat milites nisi in sacra veste Christi." The context is as follows (Harl. MS., 1708):

"Terras censuales non ad feodum donet nec faciat milites nisi in sacra veste Christi. In qua parvulos suscipere modeste caveat. Matuos autem seu discretos tam clericos quam laicos provide suscipiat. Nemo de possessione Rading. Monasterii aliquid teneat feudaliter absolutum sed ad censem annum et servitium abbati et monachis debitum."

In another Charter (Add. Ch. 19571) Henry I. grants to the Abbey, among other privileges, freedom from scutage ("quieta de denegelis . . . de scutagiis . . ." etc.).

From these passages it is clear that, while the lands of the larger Abbeys under the Norman Kings were held by knights' service, as is shown by the returns of knights' fees in 1166, yet Reading was precluded from so granting lands, and was not liable to the money composition paid to the Crown in lieu of active service.

Mr. H. J. Ellis, of the MS. Department, British Museum, points out that the Abbey might grant lands to tenants to hold on rents or services to be paid to the Abbey ("servitium debitum"). In that case the words "in sacra veste Christi" would probably mean that the lands were to be held by investiture of the Church. Battle Abbey, which likewise did not owe the Crown any knights' service for its lands, had a similar clause in one of its Charters.

For further details reference may be made to "Feudal England" by J. H. Round, and to the "Red Book of the Exchequer" (Rolls Series). In the latter Work, the return made by the Abbot of Middleton, co. Dorset, shows (p. 210) clearly the distinction between the two forms of service, and the importance to the Abbey of the freedom from military service.

<sup>2</sup> Stubbs, "Constitutional History," Vol. i., p. 397.

*Patronage of the Abbot.*

The Abbot was patron of a number of benefices<sup>1</sup> scattered about the country, and exercised control over several minor monasteries, called cells<sup>2</sup>. These benefices paid him an annual pension, the proportion of which varied in each case.

Some details of the value of these livings as well as of the Abbot's pension will be found in a Record known as Pope Nicholas' Taxation<sup>3</sup>, which was drawn up about 1291, in connection with a grant by Pope Nicholas IV. to King Edward I. of the tenths of all ecclesiastical benefices for six years, towards defraying the cost of an expedition to the Holy Land.

The following are some extracts from the Record, showing the rate of assessment and the tithe levied by the Pope:

	Taxatio. £ s. d.	Decima. £ s. d.
Eccia Sœ Marie Rading <sup>4</sup> Abbas Rector	8 0 0	16 0
Pensio Aðbis in Vicar' ejusdem indecimabilis ... ... ... 3 0 0		6 0
Eccia Sçi Egidi Abbas Rector ... ... 10 0 0		1 0 0
Vicar' in eadem ... ... ... 4 6 8		8 8
Pensio Aðbis in Vicar' ... ... ... 2 0 0		4 0
Eccia Sçi Laur' cum Vicar' indecimabilis Abb' Rector' ... ... ... 5 0 0		10 0
Eccia de Englefeld ... ... ... 10 13 4		1 1 4
Pensio Aðbis Rading' in eadem ... ... 13 4		1 4
Eccia de Thachm <sup>5</sup> ... ... ... 33 6 8		3 6 8
Pensio Aðbis Rading in eadem ... ... 13 6 8		1 6 8
Eccia de Compton ... ... ... 13 6 8		1 6 8

<sup>1</sup> A description of several of these will be found in "Views of Reading Abbey, with those of the Churches originally connected with It," 1805, Vols. i. and ii.

<sup>2</sup> Of these cells the most important was the Priory of Leominster, in Herefordshire, the dean and monks of which the Abbot of Reading had the power of appointing and removing at pleasure. Other cells were the Priory of Rindelgros in Scotland, and the Priory of May, also in Scotland, the brethren of which are spoken of as "ordinem Cluniacensem tenentibus." These priories comprised the usual monastic buildings, viz. church, cloister, chapter-house, refectory, dormitory, etc. On one occasion monks were sent from the Abbey to one of these cells by way of punishment (*Cf. "Monasticon Anglicanum,"* 1846, Vol. iv., pp. 51-63).

<sup>3</sup> "Taxatio Ecclesiastica P. Nicholai IV." (1802), p. 188, *et sparsim*.

<sup>4</sup> This and the next two entries relate to the three old parish churches in Reading, viz. St. Mary's, St. Laurence's and St. Giles'.

<sup>5</sup> Thatcham.

		Taxatio.	Decima.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Vicar' in eadem	... ...	... 4 6 8	8 8
Pensio Abbis Rading' in eadem	...	... 8 5½	10
Ecclia de Silhamstede Abbis	...	... 5 0 0	10 0
Pensio Abbis Rading' in eadem	...	... 2 0 0	4 0
Ecclia de Pangeburn	...	... 6 0 0	12 0
Pensio Abbis Rading' in eadem	...	... 1 12 8	3 3½
Ecclia de Purle	... ...	... 4 6 8	8 8
Pensio Abbis Rading' in eadem	...	... 2 0	2½

Further details will be found in the Record referred to, as well as in the Chapter on the Endowments, Privileges and Revenues, where a schedule is given of the property of the Abbey at the time of the Dissolution.

The Abbot was also a landlord and agriculturist, and doubtless took an interest in the welfare of his tenants, in their crops, in their farmhouses and cottages.

### (b) Inside the Abbey.

Inside the Abbey the Abbot was practically omnipotent, the control of affairs resting in his hands.

On the one hand, he was, as the word "abbot" implies, the father of the monastic family establishment, and had to cultivate the homelike feelings and surroundings which are so characteristic of the Benedictine monastery. On the other hand, he was responsible for discipline, and had to maintain a position of unquestioned authority. Accordingly great deference<sup>1</sup> was paid to him by the rest of the community, and implicit obedience enforced. Whenever the Abbot passed, any seated monks rose and bowed. His was the duty of punishing disobedience.

At the daily chapter he gave instruction to the community and any directions for the day that might be necessary. With him rested the power of admitting monks, and investing them with the religious habit.

The Abbot was not allowed to possess any revenues of his

<sup>1</sup> "Domno Abbati, in omni loco, ut dignum est, singularis reverentia deferuntur. . . . Ad capitulum vel ad collationem fratribus jam considentibus, si ipse intervenierit postea, non modo assurgunt, sed etiam de scabello pedes ad terram submittunt" ("Antiquiores Consuetudines Cluniacensis Monasterii," D'Achery's "Spicilegium," Vol. i., p. 684).

own ; everything must be enjoyed in common with his brethren. Nor might the alms of the monastery be used for the relief of his lay relations ; they must be strictly kept for the poor and for the entertainment of strangers.

A large house called the Abbot's Lodging, containing many rooms, was set apart for his use, and here he lived in princely state, and exercised hospitality on a lavish scale to the highest dignitaries both in Church and State.

The Abbot of Reading had a country seat at Bere Court, near Pangbourne, which had been bestowed on him by the Bishop of Salisbury in 1230, and which contained some painted glass windows, which are fully described by Ashmole<sup>1</sup>. In the east window of Sir John Davis' chapel was a figure of Hugh Cook Faringdon, wearing his pontifical robes, and holding his pastoral staff in the right hand. There were probably other country seats belonging to the Abbot at Bucklebury and Whitley, at Cholsey, near Wallingford, and at Burghfield.

## II.—*The Prior and other Officers.*

The Prior ranked next to the Abbot, and during his absence ruled over the Abbey. As head of the executive, he had the power to inflict penalties and to hold chapters, while exercising a general supervision over the affairs of the Abbey. In the absence of the Prior his duties were performed by the Sub-prior. The other officers (*obedientiarii*) were probably similar to those of other large abbeys. They included a cellarer, who had charge of the provisions for the brethren as well as for the guests ; a sacrist, who had the oversight of the Church ; an almoner, who presided over the almonry and distributed relief to the poor ; a refectory master, who was responsible for the meals ; a chamberlain, who had charge of the dormitory and of the monks' clothes ; an infirmarian, who looked after the infirmary ; a guest-master ; a hospitaller ; a treasurer and a precentor.

These need merely be mentioned, as no special information exists in regard to their duties in Reading Abbey.

<sup>1</sup> "Antiquities of Berkshire," Vol. ii., p. 333.

III.—*The Monks.*

Reading Abbey was originally intended for 200 monks, a number which shows the magnificent scale on which Henry I. planned his foundation. The actual number, however, sometimes fell considerably short of the complement; in 1305 there were only 65 monks in residence; in 1377, only 100.

Little is known in regard to their cloistered life. But the seven first brethren who, with Peter their Prior, came over from Cluny, set before themselves the same lofty standard of piety and benevolence that characterized the mother abbey, and that drew from William of Malmesbury, a contemporary chronicler, the eulogium already quoted.

The daily routine of a monastery has been so often described that the briefest summary must suffice. Seven times in each twenty-four hours<sup>1</sup> did the monks perform their devotions, the services and approximate canonical hours being :

1. Matins and lauds ...	...	...	...	12 (midnight).
2. Prime ...	...	...	...	6 a.m.
3. Tierce ...	...	...	...	9 a.m.
4. Sext ...	...	...	...	12 (noon).
5. Nones ...	...	...	...	2-3 p.m.
6. Vespers or Evensong	...	...	...	4 p.m., or later.
7. Compline ...	...	...	...	7 p.m.

As most of the services were performed by daylight, the monks found it convenient to regard the day as co-extensive with the natural day, *i.e.* with the period of daylight. Hence the exact arrangements varied somewhat at different seasons of the year, and the twelve parts or hours into which the monastic day was divided also varied in length, being longer in summer and shorter in winter.

The following is a brief summary of the routine. About midnight, or somewhat later, the monks were awakened for matins, an office lasting from one and a half to two hours, and ending with lauds; after which they went back to the dormitory and slept until daybreak, when they went to the lavatory to wash their hands and

<sup>1</sup> Duckett, "Visitations and Chapters-General of the Order of Cluni," p. 129; Clark, "The Observances in use at the Augustinian Priory at Barnwell," p. lxxxii.

comb their hair, afterwards assembling in the choir of the Church for prime.

This office was followed by the daily chapter, at which confession was made for any breach of discipline, and penance done. Moreover, matters of general interest to the community were discussed and arranged. After chapter came the chapter Mass, followed by study or exercise, till the bell summoned to the office of tierce ; this in its turn was followed by the principal act of the day, the sacrifice of the Mass. After Mass came the office of sext, followed in due course by nones, and by vespers about sunset. The last office for the day was compline, after which the monks retired to bed.

There were only two meals in the twenty-four hours, both being taken by daylight and in the refectory, *ut lumine lucernæ non indigeant<sup>1</sup>*. The first repast was probably after sext, the second one between vespers and compline. The waiting at table was done by the monks in turn, while one of them read the sacred Scriptures aloud.

No details have been preserved of the diet of the monks at Reading Abbey, as distinct from that enjoined in the Rule of St. Benedict, but the following corody granted by the Abbot to John Mawne out of the manor of Leominster indicates that the scale was a liberal one :

“ Know all men . . . that we Thomas, by divine permission  
“ Abbot of the monastery of Radynge and the convent of the same  
“ place, to our chosen in Christ, John Mawne of Asheton, esquire, for  
“ the service he has done us, and what he shall do hereafter, have  
“ granted him maintenance in victuals and drink for his life, in our  
“ manor of Leominster, viz. : While the said John is well, and in  
“ the hall there, he shall be served at dinner and supper, as the  
“ fellow monks are, except on flesh days in Advent, Septuagesima,  
“ Sexagesima and Quinquagesima, on which days he shall be  
“ served as the other esquires are. And if he be sick, or absent  
“ for any reasonable cause, he shall have the same maintenance in  
“ his chamber within our manor, and he shall receive, yearly, during  
“ his life, one robe of the suit of our esquires, and four loads of fwe  
“ in our said Manor, a chamber which Wm. Mason, chaplain,  
“ inhabited, and a stable for one horse to be kept with hay only,

<sup>1</sup> “Regula,” Caput XLI.

"and we further grant to the said John, that whilst he dwells in the town of Leominster, or elsewhere out of the bounds of the said Manor, he shall receive every day two white (monks') loaves, and one wheaten or pricked loaf, one flaggon and a half of the best ale, one mess and a half of flesh or fish, according to the day ; provided that in those days he dines in the hall, he shall not receive the said allowance, etc."

As this corody was granted to John Mawne on occasions of his being absent from the hall at meal-times, it is probably nearly the same as that "allowed to the monks, with whom, at other times, he dined." Further evidence that the diet was not stinted may be found in the following anecdote related by Fuller<sup>1</sup> :

" King Henry the Eighth, as he was hunting in Windsor Forest, either casually lost, or, more probable, wilfully losing himself, struck down, about dinner-time, to the Abbey of Reading ; where, disguising himself (much for delight, more for discovery to see unseen), he was invited to the Abbot's table, and passed for one of the King's guard, a place to which the proportion of his person might properly entitle him. A sirloin of beef was set before him (so knighted, saith tradition, by this King Henry), on which the King laid on lustily, not disgracing one of that place for whom he was mistaken. ' Well fare thy heart ! ' quoth the Abbot ; ' and here in a cup of sack I remember the health of his grace your Master. I would give one hundred pounds, on the condition I could feed so heartily on beef as you do. Alas ! my weak and squeazy stomach will hardly digest the wing of a small rabbit or chicken.' The King pleasantly pledged him, and, heartily thanking him for his good cheer, after dinner departed as undiscovered as he came thither.

" Some weeks after the Abbot was sent for by a pursuivant, brought up to London, clapped in the Tower, kept close prisoner, fed for a short time with bread and water ; yet not so empty his body of food, as his mind was filled with fears, creating many suspicions to himself, when and how he had incurred the King's displeasure. At last a sirloin of beef was set before him, on which the Abbot fed as the farmer of his grange, and verified the proverb that ' Two hungry meals make the third a glutton.' In springs King Henry out of a private lobby, where he had placed

<sup>1</sup> "Church History of Britain," edited by Brewer, Vol. iii., p. 340.

"himself, the invisible spectator of the Abbot's behaviour. 'My "Lord!" quoth the King, 'presently deposit your hundred pounds "in gold, or else no going hence all the days of your life. I have "been your physician to cure you of your squeazy stomach; and "here, as I deserve, I demand my fee for the same.' The Abbot "down with his dust, and, glad he had escaped so, returned to "Reading, as somewhat lighter in purse, so much more merrier in "heart, than when he came thence."

The monks' clothing<sup>1</sup> consisted of: (*a*) a loose black tunic or gown, with long wide sleeves; (*b*) an upper garment called a scapular<sup>2</sup>, worn during the time of work; and (*c*) a cowl or capuchin, terminating in a point behind. Under these they wore a tight habit made of white flannel, with socks and shoes<sup>3</sup>.

The monks were not allowed to possess any private property; they were vowed to poverty, because Christ was poor. In fact, their possessions consisted, apart from their clothes, of a girdle, a knife, a needle, a handkerchief, a steel pen and tablets to write on; and these articles, like the clothes, were provided by the Abbot. In marked contrast to the poverty of the individual monks was the wealth of the Abbey in ecclesiastical vestments. Of these a list is given in the Fingall Cartulary<sup>4</sup>, where we read:

The following are under the care of the Cope-Keeper :

109 Copes, of which 14 are embroidered.

2 Blue embroidered Copes.

17 Chasubles.

16 Tunicles.

1 Dalmatic and Tunicle of black camlet, presented by A., the Abbot.

2 Embroidered Altar-frontals.

4 Silk Altar-frontals for the high altar.

10 Silk Altar-frontals distributed among the other altars.

2 Gilt Thuribles.

5 Stoles with an equal number of Maniples.

7 Silk Cushions.

1 Missal, covered (co-opertum) with silver gilt.

<sup>1</sup> An illustration of a Cluniac monk is given by Dugdale, "Monasticon" (1846), Vol. v., p. iii.

<sup>2</sup> So called because it covered the scapular region.

<sup>3</sup> The Cluniac Rule specifies shoes tied with thongs, and allows the monks a cap and gloves when going beyond the precincts of the convent (*Cf.* Duckett, "Notices on Monastic and Ecclesiastical Costume").

<sup>4</sup> A reprint will be found in the *English Historical Review*, Vol. iii., p. 117.

1 Orb of silver and gilt.

3 Ivory Combs.

3 Pastoral Staves, of which one belonged to Abbot Simon, and one, with an ivory crook, to Abbot Helias. Also one with a horn crook, which belonged to Abbot Hugh, and two without a crook.

2 Collars, viz. one golden one from the King's Cope, and another silver one from the Cope of the Abbot of Ramsey.

2 Belonging to the Copes of A., the Abbot.

1 Cope of green baldachin, presented by King Henry III.

2 Blue Copes of silk material, which came with the body of the son of Earl Richard<sup>1</sup>.

1 Cope of purple baldachin, which came with the body of the daughter of the aforesaid Earl<sup>2</sup>.

The Lord Abbot A. gave one Cope to the Church of Salisbury. One Cope was returned to the sacristan, sprinkled with (holy?) oil, by Hugo Bruc'.

2 Pairs of Dalmatics and Tunicles.

1 White Chasuble, which is placed by the altar of St. Catharine.

In regard to the occupations of the brethren at Reading Abbey few details are known. Doubtless the monastic life was similar to that elsewhere, and a vivid picture of it will be found in a contemporary record of the customs observed at Durham<sup>3</sup>, an extract from which dealing with the library will be found in Chapter IX. The daily routine was peaceful and uneventful. Little time was left for idleness, the intervals between the services in choir being largely devoted to industry and acts of charity.

The transcription and illumination of books for the library and for the offices<sup>4</sup> of the Church, the keeping of ledgers, the compiling of the annals of the monastery formed important duties. In the cloister, too, was held the school<sup>5</sup> for the novices, where they studied the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric and dialectics) and the *quadrivium* (music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy). "Their "master had a pretty seat of wainscot adjoining . . . over against "the wall where they sat."

While silence was observed in the cloister, conversation and

<sup>1</sup> Richard, Earl of Cornwall.

<sup>2</sup> His daughter Isabella.

<sup>3</sup> "Monuments, Rites and Customs of Durham" (Surtees Society).

<sup>4</sup> Duckett, "Visitations and Chapters-General of the Order of Cluni," p. 169, enumerates forty-five different books that were used in the various rites and ceremonies, including the Breviarium, Cantatorium, Confessionale, Epistolarium, Evangelarium, Homiliarum, Hymnarium, Martyrologium, Missale, Processionale, Regula, Sacramentarium.

<sup>5</sup> No school could be opened in Reading without the sanction of the Abbot.

recreation were allowed in the common room, where a part of the afternoon was usually spent. In this room during winter a fire was kept burning, at which the monks could warm themselves.

#### IV.—*Lay Brethren.*

In the Abbey of Cluny<sup>1</sup> there were in addition to the regular monks a certain number of lay brethren, or conversi, who may be regarded as an inferior grade of inmates, who took no part in reciting the office in choir, but performed the rougher work of the monastery, and thus allowed the cultured monks more leisure for study and devotional exercises. What number of lay brethren existed at Reading is not known, but there is a casual reference to their existence in connection with the leper hospital, where fifty psalms were recited by the lay brethren, and the same number of prayers and aves by the converts of the monastery.

A further reference to them occurs in the Register of Reading Abbey (MSS. Cotton., Vesp. E. v., fol. 38*b*), where instructions are given as to how frequently they are to receive from the obedientiaries, *i.e.* the officers under the Abbot, fresh clothes and other necessaries which were supplied to them by the Abbey.

#### V.—*The Abbot's Retinue and Servants.*

So important a prelate as the Abbot had a great retinue of servants, who with him occupied the Abbot's Lodging, and attended on the visitors he was entertaining. The number varied at different periods of the Abbey's history, but a list has been preserved, showing the retinue as it existed under Abbot Quappelade, by whom it was reduced, on discovering that the Abbey was in debt.

A Committee was further appointed to consider the financial position, and made certain recommendations.

One was that there should be a law clerk with whom the Abbot and treasurer might consult, and who should take an oath before the chapter to do his best for the common good. There was also to be a steward elected annually, who should receive a

<sup>1</sup> "Il y avait à Cluny, comme ailleurs, dès le onzième siècle, à côté des moines profès, des frères lais ou convers, que leur ignorance des lettres réservait aux travaux corporels" (Lorain, "Essai historique sur l'Abbaye de Cluny," p. 224).

livery such as was worn by the upper servants or *armigeri*<sup>1</sup>. His stipend was to be £6 13s. 4d., together with two liveries for his two attendants, and two horses to be kept at the expense of the Abbey.

The clerk of the town was to be chamberlain-in-waiting, as was the custom, and the steward likewise, in the Abbot's hall.

Amongst the important members of the household were the Abbot's two chaplains, whose duty was to attend upon the Abbot in Church and assist him at Mass. One of them who celebrated the masses for the Countess of Sarum was also to act as the Abbot's secretary.

The Abbot had about forty servants even at a time when great economy was thought necessary, *i.e.* during the Abbacy of Nicholas de Quappelade :

1. The marshal, or master of the horse.
2. The panterer, who had charge of the napery.
3. The cup-bearer.
4. A janitor, who dined in the Abbot's hall.
5. His page.
- 6, 7. The master-cook and his boy.
8. The chamberlain of the Abbot, who carved at his table.
9. His boy.
10. A doorkeeper of the Abbot's hall.
11. An under-keeper of the pantry.
12. An under cup-bearer.
13. A hosteller, whose duty it was to receive strangers.
14. A keeper of the wine-cellar, to attend upon the Abbot after dinner in his own apartment.
15. The Abbot's under-cook.
16. The Abbot's third cook, who had the care of the larder.
- 17, 18, 19. The Abbot's carter, his boy, and the under-carter.
20. The Abbot's huntsman.
21. The prior's cook.
22. The head cook of the Abbey.
23. The chief baker.
24. The under doorkeeper.
25. A servant in waiting on the under-chamberlain.
- 26, 27. The Abbot's palfrey-keeper and his page.
- 28, 29, 30. The under-chamberlain's boy, and two other boys to attend the Abbot's company or visitors.
31. The Abbot's running footman.
32. The boy who waited in the refectory.
- 33, 34, 35, 36, 37. The cook of the infirmary and four attendants.

<sup>1</sup> *Armiger*, or esquire, was a title frequently borne by upper servants.

The number appears subsequently to have been still further reduced, for at the time of the Dissolution the following is given as the civil list of the Abbey :

					per annum. s. d.
The marshal, or master of the horse	...	...	...	...	
The panterer	...	...	...	...	8 0
The dean of the chambers	...	...	...	...	8 0
The porter	...	...	...	...	8 0
The pages	...	...	...	...	
The cook	...	...	...	...	
The scullion	...	...	...	...	1 2
The dean of the chambers	...	...	...	...	8 0
The butler or manciple	...	...	...	...	4 0
The second and third ditto	...	...	...	...	4 0
The dean of the wardrobe	...	...	...	...	8 0
The hostler	...	...	...	...	1 0
The baker	...	...	...	...	4 0
The second and third ditto	...	...	...	...	4 0
The first smith	...	...	...	...	13 4
The second ditto	...	...	...	...	6 0
The keeper of the Abbot's palfrey	...	...	...	...	4 0
The gardener	...	...	...	...	4 0
The miller	...	...	...	...	2 0

with other inferior servants.

A comparison of these two lists makes it clear that the number of servants varied considerably at different periods of the Abbey's existence, depending doubtless partly on the number of monks and partly on the state of its finances.





## Chapter vii.

### *The Endowments, Privileges and Revenues of the Abbey.*

**R**EADING ABBEY, as appears by the Foundation Charter, was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and to St. John the Evangelist, and was richly endowed by King Henry I., as well as by subsequent benefactors. In this Chapter some account will be given of its Endowments, Privileges and Revenues.

#### I.—*Endowments.*

Henry I. annexed to the Abbey the lands of Cholsey<sup>1</sup> in Berkshire, of Leominster in Herefordshire, and Reading<sup>2</sup> itself, with all their appendages, woods, arable and pasture lands, meadows, waters, mills and fisheries, together with their churches, chapels, cemeteries, tithes and oblations. His benefaction further included the churches of Thatcham and Wargrave in Berkshire, the church of Hanborough in Oxfordshire, with the confirmation of the Manor

<sup>1</sup> The “Index to Charters and Rolls in the Department of MSS. in the British Museum,” Vol. i. (*Index Locorum*), gives references to Cholsey and to other localities mentioned in this Section.

<sup>2</sup> At the time of the Domesday Survey the Church of Reading, with an appendage of eight hides of land, was annexed to Battle Abbey. But it was exchanged, *circa* 1121, by Henry I. for the Manor of Appledram (Dugdale, “*Monasticon*,” 1846, Vol. iii., p. 247).

of Rokington, or Rowington, in Warwickshire, given by Adelicia de Ivery, and a grant of a hide and a half in Hocton, or Houghton (Bedfordshire), the gift of Robert, Earl of Leicester; the church of Wychebury in Wiltshire, and some land there which belonged to a monk named Ingelramus, with the lands of Robert the priest, at Hampton in Hampshire, and what Robert de Ferrars possessed in Reading.

The second Queen of Henry I., Adeliza, who survived him, and married William de Albini, Earl of Arundel, gave to the Abbey her manor of Eastone or Aston in Hertfordshire (which had been settled upon her as part of her dower), in order to obtain the prayers of the monks for the soul of the late King, for her own soul, the souls of her father and mother, and also for the health of King Stephen and Queen Maud, his wife. She also gave the land of Reginald the forester in her manor of Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire, settled on her by King Henry, to the yearly value of 100 shillings, and afterwards the patronage and revenues of the church to supply the expense of a lamp, which was to burn continually before the pix and the tomb of the founder.

After the death of William de Albini, Adeliza further endowed the Abbey with the church of Berkley-Harness in Gloucestershire, with all its rights and appendages, with the prebends belonging to the said church and the prebends of two manors, together with the churches of Cham, Erlingham, Wotton, Beverstan and Almodesbury.

She also gave to the Abbey 100 shillings every Christmas Day, to be paid out of a hithe or wharf called Queenhythe, in London, towards the expenses of celebrating the founder's anniversary.

The Empress Maud, daughter of Henry I., gave to the Abbey for the souls of Henry, her father, Queen Maud, her mother, and all her predecessors in perpetual alms, the valuable manor of Blewberry in Berkshire with all its appendages and its tenants in servile tenure.

She also gave to the Abbey the manor of East Hendred in Berkshire, the land of Herbert, son of Fulcherius, in Marlborough, the lands of Geoffrey Purcell in Windsor and Catshill, and the manor of Bromesfield; and confirmed to the Abbey the churches of Berkley-Harness, Stanton and Thatcham.

David, King of Scotland, gave to the Abbey of Reading the two priories of Rindalros and May, which, in consequence, became cells to the Abbey. They were, however, soon after restored to the bishopric of St. Andrews, and probably remained attached to it, in spite of efforts on the part of Reading Abbey to recover them.

King Stephen at different times confirmed to the Abbey all former Charters, liberties and donations, among which are specified Thatcham and Wargrave; Rowington in Warwickshire; the church and manor of Hanborough in Oxfordshire, given by Simon, Earl of Northampton; the manor of Ingelramus in Wichbury; the manor of Wigstan in Leicestershire, given by Arnaldus de Bosco, and confirmed to the Abbey by Robert, Earl of Leicester; with the land in Wigstan, held by William, the King's almoner, afterwards a monk at Reading; together with some houses and lands in Cambridge and Southampton, reserving only to the Crown out of East Hendred an annual rent-charge of 100 shillings. He likewise confirmed to the Abbey the manor of Aston in Hertfordshire, and the rent-charge of 100 shillings in Stanton, given by Queen Adeliza; the land of Walter Purcele in Windsor, reserving twenty shillings yearly to his brother Ralph; the lands in Catshill, another hide of land in Windsor, with the houses and lands in London, given by Algarus the priest, and Baldwin, his brother.

Henry II. confirmed all the Charters and donations of Henry I. and the Empress Maud; the grant of Carsewell or Kersewell in Burghfield, by Almericus Fitz-Ralph; and the manor of Streatley, by William de Mandeville. He gave the Abbey permission to enclose a park in the place called "Cumba," for the use of sick persons, whether monks or strangers; and confirmed to them the sale of the lands at Whitley by Peter de Cosham, for eighty pounds, and an annual payment of a bezant of gold.

Henry II. likewise granted to the Abbey an annual payment at the Exchequer of forty marks of silver, until he could secure to them a revenue of the same value. This he afterwards granted out of the manor of Hoo, by the assignment of Robert Bardolf on the day of the dedication of the Abbey church. He likewise granted to the Abbey the right of importing goods free of duty in all the sea-ports.

Richard I. confirmed all the privileges and possessions granted to the Abbey of Reading by former Charters, and likewise the land given by William, Earl of Sussex, at Quidenham in Norfolk; that which was given by William, Earl Ferrers, in Stamford; by Henry Fitzgerald in Sawbridgeworth; by Michael de Baseville in Lechebroc; by Ralph de Offinton, and what was held of them in Cambridge, by Lawrence the porter; the church of Englefield with its appendages; the manors of Blewbery and Hendred; the church of Berkley-Harness, with all its churches, chapels and appendages; the churches of Stanton and Thatcham.

King John recited and confirmed the Charter of his brother Richard, and he likewise assigned to the Abbey a mark of gold to cover the hand of St. James; and presented to the Abbey the head of St. Philip the Apostle, as appears by a marginal note of some monk in the Fingall Cartulary, fol. 18. This mark of gold was given when he was Earl of Mortain, and confirmed to the Abbey after his accession to the Crown, but it was changed by Henry III. to ten marks of silver. King John also confirmed his father's grant of forty marks of silver out of the manor of Hoo, and a tenement at Dunwich in Norfolk, purchased of Walter de Westlestun.

Henry III. confirmed the Charters of his predecessors, and was frequently at Reading, as appears by several patents bearing teste there. He further confirmed the rent-charge of 100 shillings out of the land of Robert de Duddlesfold in Petteworth, with some land at Fernhurst and a mill at Sutton, all in the county of Sussex.

Edward II. in his third year confirmed the Abbot's right to farm 40 acres in the New Forest, at the annual rent of forty shillings, paid to Queen Eleanor, to whom the New Forest was granted. And the Queen, by letters patent, ordered that all the cattle of the Abbot of Reading should be free from pannage and herbage throughout the year.

Subsequent monarchs granted confirmatory Charters, but do not appear to have added to the endowments of the Abbey.

## II.—*Privileges and Immunities.*

In addition to the endowments bestowed on Reading Abbey, Henry Beauclerc conferred many privileges and immunities.

"No person, whether small or great," says the Charter, "may exact anything, whether as a due or custom, or by violence, from the men, lands or possessions of the said monastery ; he may not exact military service, nor service on any expedition, nor for construction of bridges or castles, nor service of horses, nor of pack-horses, nor cartage, nor boats, nor labour, nor tribute, nor gifts ; but let the monks of Reading, with their servants and effects be free from all gelt<sup>1</sup> and toll and every other custom, by land and by water, in passage of bridges, and in the sea-ports, throughout England."

Thus the Abbey was highly favoured, and if any of its tenants, or aliens, committed any unlawful act within their possessions, or were taken there, they enjoyed the privileges of the hundred courts, and all manner of pleas, with soc<sup>2</sup> and sac<sup>3</sup>, toll<sup>4</sup> and theam<sup>5</sup>, infangenthaf<sup>6</sup>, utfangenthaf<sup>7</sup> and hamsocna<sup>8</sup>.

A further privilege of no small importance was that of coining money. Details of the mint and of coins struck there will be found in Chapter VIII.

The original Charter was followed by a second, dated at Westminster, with some additions, among which is an exemption of all the property of the Abbey, whether lay or ecclesiastical, from dane-geld and all other taxes or aids ; from all county and hundred courts, pleas and suits of law ; from scutage, hidage, stallage, and toll for carriage or horseback ; from finding carriages ; from ship-money, erecting of bridges, building of castles, conveyance of the public money, and from all kind of public labour ; from tribute and customs in fairs and markets ; from tedinpenny<sup>9</sup> and tinpenny, that is,

<sup>1</sup> "Gelt," an impost.

<sup>2</sup> "Soc," the right of holding a court. This and the following privileges were derived from Saxon times, and were bestowed in some degree on every lord or great tenant.

<sup>3</sup> "Sac," the right of the lord of a manor to hold a court in cases of trespass among his own vassals.

<sup>4</sup> "Toll," the right of holding a market.

<sup>5</sup> "Theam," the right of the lord of a manor to the issue of his bondmen and villains.

<sup>6</sup> "Infangenthaf," the right of judging a thief caught in a manor by the lord of the manor.

<sup>7</sup> "Utfangenthaf," the right of judging a thief caught outside the lord's manor.

<sup>8</sup> "Hamsocna," penalty for forcible entry into a man's house.

<sup>9</sup> Or tithing-penny, a small tax paid by each tithe to the sheriff for court expenses.

money paid to the sheriff by the several tithings or to the tithe-man, by the several divisions of his district ; from all summonses to any courts of assize ; from all amercements or forfeitures ; from all assarts or forfeitures for destroying trees and waste of woods.

None of the officers of the King were allowed to exercise any right in the Abbot's woods, even when within the limits of the royal forests, the Abbot, monks, and the servants of the Abbey enjoying the same power and liberty in their woods as the King had in his own.

Another privilege granted by a special Charter of the founder was that of holding a fair on the day of the festival of St. Laurence and the three following days ; no one was to be disturbed either in coming or going, under a penalty of ten pounds. Henry II. further allowed the Abbot and monks the privilege of holding a fair annually on St. James' and the three following days, and confirmed to them the right of a Sunday market at Thatcham, commanding the inhabitants of the county to attend it, and forbidding the men of Newbury to do those who frequented it any injury. King John likewise granted them the power of holding a fair on the vigil of the Feast of St. Philip and St. James, on the day of the festival and the two following ones.

Henry III. changed the Sunday fair at Leominster, Wallingford, and other places to a different day for the benefit of the Abbey, and granted the privilege of the right of free-warren on all the estates of the Abbey, with an exemption from *lawing* of all dogs belonging to them within the royal forests. The lands within certain bounds were exempt from the forest laws.

In 1207 Pope Innocent III. confirmed all the privileges of the Foundation Charter to the Abbot and monks of Reading, and added further favours of his own ; and more especially gave leave that, in case of a general interdict of the kingdom, they might, after shutting the gates and keeping out the excommunicated and interdicted, and without tolling the bell, celebrate Divine service in a low voice.

### III.—*Revenues.*

The revenues of Reading Abbey amounted to a large sum. Amongst the sources of income may be mentioned such spiritualities as advowsons and parochial tithes, and such temporalities

as tolls, profits on its mint, on grain and fulling mills, fisheries, rents of manors and manor-houses, fines for breaches of the law, and chepyn-gavell, the value of which was more or less definite. More variable sources of profit would come in the form of provisions, corn, cattle, wood and presents.

Some evidence of the wealth of the Abbey lies in the fact that on several occasions the Sovereign applied to it for a loan. Thus, in 1243 King Henry III. received 100 marks from the Abbey, as an aid on his going into Gascony, and a few years later again attempted to borrow a large sum of money from the principal abbeys, including Reading. In this, however, the King was not successful.

Again, in 1337 Edward III. borrowed from the Abbey several valuable gold vessels and jewels<sup>1</sup> estimated to be worth £200, and in 1346 he again borrowed £100. In 1379 £50 was lent to Richard II.<sup>2</sup>

But in spite of its wealth and endowments the Abbey was more than once in financial straits, and numbered amongst its creditors the great European financiers of the period, the Lombards and the Caorsini. Sometimes this may have been due to extravagance on the part of the Abbot and monks. But a more likely cause was the custom of the King and the nobles of the land to treat the larger monasteries as inns. Not infrequently on their journeys they would spend a week or more at some convenient religious house, and together with their retinue of knights and retainers involve their hosts in heavy expenditure. What can have been more agreeable after the excitements of Court life than to devote a few days to sport or leisure on the fragrant banks of the Kennet or Thames! For instance, we read that King Henry IV. stayed at Reading Abbey in 1403 from January 9 to 20<sup>3</sup>, and a large outlay would be inevitable. As early as the third year of Edward I. an Act had been passed in order to check this custom, which nevertheless continued in vogue.

A further contributory cause is to be found in the corrodies that were from time to time granted by the King to servants, entitling them to maintenance in a monastery. Thus, in 1310

<sup>1</sup> Leland, "Collectanea," Vol. ii., p. 625.

<sup>2</sup> "Calendar of Patent Rolls, Richard II.," 1377-1381 (Rolls Series), p. 635.

<sup>3</sup> Wylie, "History of England under Henry IV.," Vol. ii., p. 288.

King Edward II. sent to the Abbot and convent of Reading " Robert Pipard, who long served the late Queen Eleanor and the King, and requests them to admit him into their house, and to provide him maintenance in food and clothing, according to his estate, for his lifetime<sup>1</sup>."

Several instances of financial difficulty are recorded. For example, in the 37th year of the reign of Henry III. the Abbey was so heavily in debt, that the King issued several precepts addressed to the knights and freemen who held lands under the Abbey, asking them to help to liquidate its debts by making a contribution for the purpose.

Again, in 1275 the debts were so onerous that King Edward I. took the management of affairs into his own hands and appointed a commissioner, Roland de Harlegh, knight, to administer the affairs of the Abbey<sup>2</sup>. A few years later, too (1286), Ralph de Broton, the King's clerk, was appointed by the King keeper of the Abbey of Reading, the manor of Leominster and the other manors of the said Abbey ; to apply its revenues to the payment of its debts, " saving a reasonable sum for the maintenance of the monks and the dispensation of alms."

Soon after the installation of Abbot Quappelade the Abbey was found in debt to the extent of £1,227 7s. 8d., and Quappelade at once took measures to reduce the debt by diminishing the number of servants as well as the annual expenses.

These periods of financial difficulty were, however, probably exceptional and temporary occurrences ; for the Abbey at Reading was one of the wealthiest in England, as is proved by a valuation of the revenues of the principal religious houses at the time of Henry VIII. Reading ranks sixth in order, as will be seen from the following table<sup>3</sup> :

	<i>lib.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>ob.</i>	<i>q.<sup>4</sup></i>
St. Peter's, Westminster	...	...	...	3,977	6 4 1 1
Glastonbury	...	...	...	3,508	13 4 1 1

<sup>1</sup> "Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward II.," 1307-1313 (Rolls Series), p. 220. Another corrodoy was granted by Edward II. in 1310, and another in 1316.

<sup>2</sup> "Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward I.," 1272-1281 (Rolls Series), pp. 81, 128.

<sup>3</sup> Fuller, "Church History of Britain," Vol. iii., p. 329.

<sup>4</sup> *Ob*, abbreviation for *obolus*, and used in connection with £ s. d. to represent a farthing ; *q*, abbreviation for *quadrans*, and used to denote a farthing, or half a farthing (Stanford, "Dictionary of Anglicized Words and Phrases").

	<i>lib.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>ob.</i>	<i>q.</i>
St. Albans ... ... ... ...	2,510	6	1	1	1
St. John's of Jerusalem (Middlesex) ...	2,385	19	8	0	0
St. Edmundsbury ... ... ...	2,336	16	0	0	0
Reading ... ... ...	2,116	3	9	0	1

The various sources of income of Reading Abbey at its dissolution are given in the following Schedule :

SCHEDULE OF THE LATE DISSOLVED MONASTERY OF  
READING, 31st OF HENRY VIII.<sup>1</sup>

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Cholsey manor and rectory with their appurtenances ...	201	16	9
Blewbury manor with its appurtenances ...	121	4	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
East Hendred manor, given by the Empress Maud ...	38	14	9
Burhdebury manor and rectory ...	50	0	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Thatcham rectory, with Greenham, Midgeham, Crookham and Colethorp ...	101	6	6
Pangbourne manor ...	24	8	4
Basyldon manor ...	6	5	5
Shyningfield, or Shinfield, tenements and land ...	9	6	0
Sonning, manor of Bulmershe and lands ...	7	6	8
Wargrave rectory ...	30	0	0

BOROUGH OF READING.

Rent of assize ... ... ... ...	21	12	5
Customary rents ... ... ... ...	92	18	4
Mills. Two grain mills and fulling mills, called St. Giles' mills, with the tythes of the same; a fishery called Tanlock; two other mills, and a fulling mill in St. Mary's parish, called Mynster mills, and fishery called Grey's lock	40	0	0

READING DEANERY.

Rents in Tilehurst, Whitley, Coley, Greyshall, Stratfield, Mortimer, Sulhamstead, Beenham, Ufton, Battel (farm) ...	130	9	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
The farm of Windsor Underore ... ... ...	6	19	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
The manor of Whitley, including the issues from lands in Whitley, Tilehurst, Beyneham, Ufton, Battel and Reading	96	11	5
Agistment of Whitley Park ... ... ...	3	0	0
Calcot mill and lands in Tilehurst parish ... ... ...	2	13	4
Fishery of the Kennet ... ... ...	0	13	4
Rectory of Beenham ... ... ...	3	6	8
Rectories of Tilehurst, Coley and Whitley ... ... ...	20	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Ministers' Accounts, 30-31 Henry VIII., No. 85.

TOWN OF READING.

							£	s.	d.
Tolls of the fairs	...	...	...	..	...	...	1	1	4
Tolls of the market	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	7	0
Cheaping-gavel...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	12	11
Perquisites of courts	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	17	2
Bailiwick of the Liberty	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	0
Perquisites of its courts	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	9	10

SUSSEX.

Duddlesford manor	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	9	0
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WARWICKSHIRE.

Rowington manor and rectory	...	...	...	...	...	...	73	10	0
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WILTS.

Manor of Whitesbury	...	...	...	...	...	...	21	19	8
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KENT.

Manor of Windhull	...	...	...	...	...	...	38	0	0
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OXON.

Stanton-Harcourt rectory	...	...	...	...	...	...	30	0	0
Lands in Sewell	...	...	..	...	...	...	6	0	0

LONDON.

Divers tenements, particularly one called Redyng-place, in the parish of St. Andrew, near Baynard Castle, reserved to the use of the Abbot	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	0	0
Summa	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	0	0

HERTS.

Sebrightford manor	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	2	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
Aston manor	...	...	...	...	...	...	36	19	11 $\frac{1}{4}$

BEDFORDSHIRE.

Houghton manor	...	...	...	...	...	...	10	15	11
Small rents collected by the bailiff, or out-steward, in Tygle- hurst and other places	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	13	10

PASTURES AND MEADOWS.

Cowick	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	13	4
Estmede, near the road to Caversham	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	0	0

*Reading Abbey.*

	£	s.	d.
Three fields called Crown-field, Burfield, and the Grove and lands called Spittlefields ... ... ... ...	6	8	4
An inn in Reading called the Crown ... ... ... ...	3	6	8
Tanhousmede ... ... ... ...	1	10	0
Garden in London St. called Caves Orchard ... ... ... ...	1	6	8
Two messuages in St. Laurence's parish ... ... ...			
Meadows in Battel ... ... ... ...	2	10	0
Meadows in Sulhamstead ... ... ... ...	1	0	0
A tenement called the Hind's head ... ... ... ...	1	6	8
Tithes of Mote-hall in Tyglehurst ... ... ... ...	7	0	0
Tithes of West-wood-row, in the same ... ... ... ...	1	6	8
Tithes in Northcot ... ... ... ...	2	2	0
Tithes in Whitley ... ... ... ...	0	6	8
Tithes of tenement called Yeld ... ... ... ...	0	2	0
Tithes of tenement called Pepyrs ... ... ... ...	0	6	8
Tithes of two messuages called Fridays and Renes ... ...	0	5	0
Tithes of two messuages called Fulryches and Sarratts ... ...	0	6	8
Tithes of meadow near Reading called Frogmarsh ... ...	0	8	0
Tithes of Cowick ... ... ... ...	1	3	4

## POSSESSIONS OF THE OFFICE OF ALMONER.

Rents of assize in Reading ... ... ... ...	6	1	0
Customary rents there ... ... ... ...	23	15	4
Manor of Burghfield ... ... ... ...	15	0	0
Pension from the vicar of St. Laurence's in Reading ...	5	0	0

## POSSESSIONS OF THE OFFICE OF CELLARER.

Rents of assize in Reading ... ... ... ...	0	7	5
Customary rents ... ... ... ...	0	13	4
Rents of assize in Sheffield, Calcot, Wokefield, Caversham and Cold-Norton ... ... ... ...	13	8	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
Customary rents in the same ... ... ... ...	7	18	2
A sheepcote and lands in Sewell, and Little Tew in Oxfordshire ... ... ... ...	6	0	0
Pension from the Abbot of St. Augustin, in Bristol ... ...	13	6	8

## BELONGING TO THE OFFICE OF SACRIST.

Rents of assize in Reading ... ... ... ...	1	7	6
Customary rents there ... ... ... ...	4	16	0

## PENSIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING CHURCHES.

St. Giles', Reading ... ... ... ...	2	0	0
St. Mary's ... ... ... ...	2	0	0
Sulhamstead rectory ... ... ... ...	2	0	0
Englefield rectory ... ... ... ...	0	13	4

						£ s. d.
Compton vicarage	...	...	...	...	...	0 8 0
Hanborough rectory	...	...	...	...	...	1 10 0
Sulham rectory...	...	...	...	...	...	0 4 0
Purley rectory ...	...	...	...	...	...	0 2 0
Beenham vicarage	...	...	...	...	...	0 1 0
Pangbourne rectory	...	...	...	...	...	1 12 8
Wargrave vicarage	...	...	...	...	...	1 0 0

BELONGING TO THE REFECTIONERY.

Rents of assize in Reading	...	...	...	...	...	0 9 0
Customary rents there ...	...	...	...	...	...	0 10 0

BELONGING TO THE OFFICE OF SUB-PRIOR.

Rents of assize...	...	...	...	...	...	0 3 4
In Blewbury	...	...	...	...	...	0 18 0
In Sheepbridge	...	...	...	...	...	0 13 4
A building in the Market-place	...	...	...	...	...	0 13 4
Rents of tenants, copyholders...	...	...	...	...	...	5 18 0

BELONGING TO THE OFFICE OF GRANETARY.

Rents of assize ...	...	...	...	...	...	0 10 10
Customary rents	...	...	...	...	...	11 11 4

BELONGING TO THE OFFICE OF WOODFOLDER.

Rents of assize...	...	...	...	...	...	0 5 0
Customary rents	...	...	...	...	...	13 6 4

BELONGING TO THE KEEPER OF THE CHAPEL  
OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

Rents of assize...	...	...	...	...	...	0 16 3 $\frac{1}{2}$
In Burghfield	...	...	...	...	...	0 3 0
In Tilehurst	...	...	...	...	...	0 0 6
Customary in Reading	...	...	...	...	...	12 10 8
						<hr/>
From the priory of Leominster and its dependent parishes...						1,474 17 3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pensions to the Abbot from rectories	...	...	...	...	...	480 0 0
						<hr/>
Total	...	...	2,042	9	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	

The total of these sums amounts to a revenue of £2,042 9s. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., nearly equal to the value stated by Speed<sup>1</sup> (£2,116 3s. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.).

<sup>1</sup> "The Historie of Great Britaine," p. 1043.

In the “*Valor Ecclesiasticus*” (Henry VIII.), Vol. ii., p. 154, the amount is stated as £1,938 14s. 3d., the difference being possibly due to the nominal value being reckoned in one case, and the clear yearly revenue in another. By the account given in at the Augmentation Office the estates did not amount to more than £1,402 9s. 10½d.; but the site of the monastery and demesne were not included, as being in hand that year. If it is borne in mind that a penny in the reign of King Henry VIII. was nearly equal in value to a shilling at the present time<sup>1</sup>, it follows that, estimated in modern money, the gross rental of the Abbey was equivalent to nearly £25,000.

<sup>1</sup> Froude, “*History of England*,” Vol. i., p. 26; Rogers, “*Six Centuries of Work and Wages*,” p. 539.





## Chapter viii.

### *The Armorial Bearings, Seals and Coinage of the Abbey.*

#### I.—*The Arms of the Abbey.*



THE blazon of the Shield of Arms belonging to the Abbey is azure three escallops or<sup>1</sup>, and a relief of them in stone may still be seen on the west front of St. Laurence's Church, although in a defaced condition (Fig. I.). These arms were granted by the founder of the Abbey, King Henry I., and were borne in honour of St. James the Elder, also called St. James of Compostella, one of its patron saints. Owing doubtless to his legendary travels, St. James is frequently represented in the habit and with the staff of a pilgrim, wearing in his hat the scallop shell; and pilgrims to his sepulchre were wont to gather the shells on the sea-shore and wear them in their hoods or hats, as evidence of their pilgrimage.

Another association with St. James may be found in the possession by the Abbey of his hand amongst its relics, as will be described further on.

<sup>1</sup> Authorities: Ashmole, "Visitation of Berks," 1664-1666, C. 12, Part ii., f. 199; "Arms of Abbeys and Priorys" (a MS. Book of Arms painted between 1525 and 1536), L. 10, ff. 65, 74a; Benolt, "Visitation of Devon and Cornwall in 1531," G. 2, f. 101; "Vincent MS.," No. 187, p. 49; "E.D.N. Royal Badges," p. 13; King's MS. "Heraldica Miscellanea," Vol. xiii., p. 89.

II.—*The Seals of the Abbey.*

Reading Abbey had two different seals during its history, one belonging to the twelfth, the other to the fourteenth century.

(a) *First Seal.*

The earliest one (Fig. XIII.), which is preserved in the British Museum, is green, and measures about  $3 \times 2$  inches. It is thus described in the Museum Catalogue<sup>1</sup>:



FIG. XIII.—*The Abbey Seal (12TH CENT.).*

Pointed oval: the Virgin, with crown and embroidered drapery, seated on a carved throne: on her lap the Child lifting up the right hand in benediction, in the left hand an orb. In the Virgin's right hand a sceptre or lily branch, topped with a dove, in the left hand a model of a church.

Legend wanting.

<sup>1</sup> "Catalogue of Seals in the Department of MSS., British Museum," Vol. i., p. 713.

(b) *Second Seal.*

The second Abbey seal, dating from 1328, is round, with a diameter of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches (Fig. XIV.). The original is attached to a Charter in the Chapter-house at Hereford, but is represented in the British Museum by a sulphur cast, which is thus described in the Catalogue :

*Obverse* : The Virgin, with crown, seated on a throne, the Child on her left knee, and in her right hand an orb ; between St. James the Greater, with pilgrim's cap, staff, book and wallet on the left ; St. John the Evangelist standing on an eagle, in the right hand a scroll inscribed :—IN PRINCIPIO (John i. 1), in the left hand a palm-branch, on the right. Each in a separate niche, carved and ornamented with a canopy of open tracery with ogee arch, crocketed and pinnacled. The corbel carved with foliage. At each side a wavy branch.

S' CŒ · ECCŒ · CŒVETVAL' · RADYNG' · FVDATE · I · HONORE  
SCE · MARIE · ET · APOSTL'OR · IOH'IS · ET · IACOBI<sup>1</sup>.

Inside the edge the date-verse :

ANNO : MILLENO · TRICETENO : FABRICAT'.

*Reverse* : King Henry I., with crown, seated, on the right hand a sceptre fleury, in the left hand a model of a church ; between, on the left St. Peter with book and keys, on the right St. Paul with book and sword. Each in a niche as in the *obverse*. The corbel and branches as in the *obverse* also.

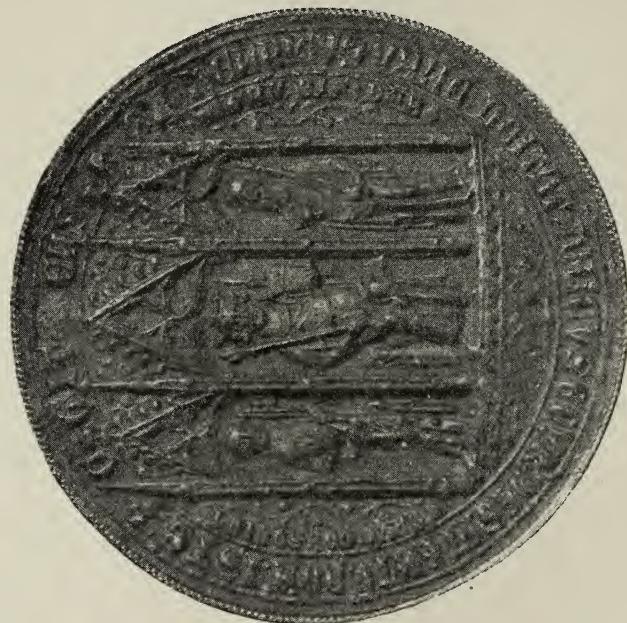
ENS · REX · HENRICVS VMME : DEITAT' : AMICUS  
· ECVR' : DEGIT ENTV : DOM' : ISTE : PEGIT.

Inside the edge the following verse, which completes the distich indicative of the date of the seal :

SIGNV : BIS : DENO : B' : Q<sup>A</sup>RTO : CONSOCIAT<sup>2</sup> :

<sup>1</sup> "The common seal of the Conventional Church of Reading, founded in honour of St. Mary and of the Apostles John and James."

<sup>2</sup> "The seal was manufactured and adopted in 1328."

*Reverse.**Obverse.*FIG. XIV.—*The Abbey Seal (1328).*

The Legend of the *reverse*, written out in full, is as follows<sup>1</sup>:

Ens Rex Henricus summe Deitatis amicus securus degito tentum ; domus iste peregit.

The loops show when of the two recurring letters one is omitted; the *italics* show the contraction or abbreviations which are to be supplied.

The translation is probably as follows: "King Henry, being a "friend of the supreme Deity, lived in security; this man com- "pleted the possessions of the house."

*Ens* is an imaginary participle of the verb *sum*; *tentum* is probably a participle of *teneo*—the holding or property; *domus*—of the convent.

In the original seal the D in Dom' is somewhat injured. It looks like D, but at the same time may be B. Again, the M is indistinct, and may be N. In this case the reading would be Bon' (Bonis), which would require to be taken with ISTE—"this good "man" completed the property.

(c) *Seal of Abbot Hugh II.*

Another seal of interest is now at Canterbury Cathedral (Fig. XV.), and belonged to the noted Abbot Hugh II. (1180-1199). It measures  $3 \times 1\frac{3}{4}$  inches, and is represented in the Museum by a sulphur cast. It is thus described in the Catalogue:

Pointed oval: the Abbat, standing on a dwarf-column, in the right hand a pastoral staff, in the left hand a book.

\* SIGILLVM HVGONIS · RADINGENSIS · ABBATIS.

In addition to these, the National Collection contains<sup>2</sup>:

- (a) The Sulphur Cast of a Counter-seal (13th century).
- (b) The Seal of Abbot Robert de Burgate (1286).
- (c) The Signet of Abbot John Thorne II. (1493).
- (d) The Seal of the Prior (1242).

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Dr. W. de Gray Birch, Assistant in the Department of MSS. in the British Museum, for this interpretation of the Legend.

<sup>2</sup> "Catalogue of Seals in the Department of MSS., British Museum," Vol. i., p. 714.

Amongst these various seals the most beautiful specimen is the Abbey seal of 1328, and doubtless this and the earlier one were used in the legal transactions which extensive property in land involved. Occasionally frauds were attempted by counterfeiting the seal. For instance, in 1290 Isaac de Pulet<sup>1</sup>, a Jew of London, was arrested "for counterfeiting the seals of the Abbot and 'convent of Radinges, and sealing with the counterfeits false 'writings in the names of the Abbot and convent and certain 'Jews, involving large sums." Again, in 1534 John Redyng<sup>2</sup>,



FIG. XV.—*The Seal of Abbot Hugh II. (1180-1199).*

Sub-prior of Leominster, "made a counterfeit seal like the chequer seal in the keeping of the Abbot of Reading, with which he deceived many of the poor tenants and extorted money from them."

<sup>1</sup> "Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward I," 1281-1292 (Rolls Series), p. 402.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII," Vol. vii., No. 1678.

III.—*The Coinage of the Abbey.*

Although Reading Abbey<sup>1</sup> during several reigns enjoyed the privilege of a mint and a moneyer or coiner, little is known of its coinage. Ruding gives the following account of the mint<sup>2</sup>:

“ In the Foundation Charter of the Abbey, granted by Henry I. “ in 1125, his 25th year, the King, amongst other privileges, “ granted to that monastery a mint, and one moneyer in Reading.

“ This Charter was confirmed by Stephen (but the mint and “ moneyer were to be in London), and afterwards twice by “ Henry II. In his first Charter the mint does not occur, but the “ second follows the words of the original grant by Henry I., “ except that the mint and moneyer might be either in Reading or “ in London.

“ It was again confirmed, according to the form of the last “ grant, by Richard I.

“ In King John’s Charter the mint and moneyer were fixed at “ Reading.

“ Henry III. confirmed the Charter, in his 11th year, but without noticing either the mint or the moneyer.

“ At a subsequent period, however, the Bishop of Salisbury, by “ the King’s command, granted to Abbot Hugh and the monks of “ Reading, one moneyer in London, where he was authorized to “ coin, and also to hold an exchange, and where he and his family “ were to live free from all pleas; and in all causes and customs to “ be within the power of the Abbot and monks of Reading, as if “ he resided in Reading; and this privilege was to descend to the “ successors of Edgar, who was then moneyer. And the said “ Edgar, and whosoever should be moneyer after him, was to pay “ for the mint to the Abbot and monks all such profits and customs “ as the other moneyers of London paid to the King; and he had “ power to exchange within the Abbot’s land in Reading, according “ to the Abbot’s grant to him, or his successors, for ever.

“ Notwithstanding the numerous grants referred to above, no “ coins have yet been discovered of an earlier date than the reign

<sup>1</sup> There was a mint at Reading in Saxon times during the reign of Æthelred II.

<sup>2</sup> “ Annals of the Coinage of Great Britain,” Vol. ii., p. 155. A figure and description of a penny erroneously said to belong to the reign of Edward I. is given in Vol. ii., p. 381, and Vol. iii., Part ii., Plate i., No. 27.

"of Edward I<sup>1</sup>., and it should seem that but few of them were "struck, as they are extremely rare. They are pennies only, and "read on the obverse EDW, which fixes them to Edward I., and "on the reverse VILLA RADINGY, with an escalllop shell in the "second quarter of the cross, such being the mint mark of the "Abbey, whose arms were, azure three escalllop shells or.

"The privilege of coining was withdrawn by Edward II. in his "eighth year, his Charter of confirmation having these words : "prædicta clausula de moneta et uno monetario excepta." But "Edward III. not only restored the mint, in his twelfth year, but "added a license to strike the smaller coins<sup>2</sup>.

"This grant is referred to in a writ directed to the treasurer "and barons of the Exchequer, which bears date on the 8th of "November, 1338. In it the King declares, that he had, by his "Charter, granted to the Abbot and monks of Redyng, that they "and their successors should for ever have one moneyer and one "die for the making as well halfpennies and farthings as sterlings, "which they had been accustomed to make, without hindrance "from the King, his heirs, etc. ; and commands the said treasurer "and barons to deliver to the said Abbot and monks, or their "attorney, without delay, one die for sterlings, another for half- "pennies, and a third for farthings, provided the aforesaid die for "sterlings should not be sufficient for making the halfpennies and "farthings also.

"Another writ, dated on the 17th of the same month, was "directed to John de Flete, warden of the King's mint in London. "It likewise referred to the above-mentioned grant, and com- "manded Flete to make without delay, at the expense of the "Abbot, three dies of hard and sufficient metal, viz. one for "sterlings, another for halfpennies, and the third for farthings, for "the making of money in a certain place in Reading, with such "impression and circumscription as the Abbot should appoint ; and "to send the same, as soon as possible, to the King's Exchequer

<sup>1</sup> The penny attributed by Ruding and Hawkins to the time of Edward I. is now generally assigned to that of Edward III.

<sup>2</sup> The privilege granted by Edward III. to coin farthings (*obolos*) and halfpence (*ferlingos*) appears to have been an exceptional one, for at first only dies for pennies (*sterlingos*) were allowed (Ruding, "Annals of the Coinage of Great Britain," Vol. ii., p. 136; Rymer, "Fœdera," Vol. ii., Part ii., p. 1058).

"at Westminster, that they might be delivered to the said Abbot  
"within fifteen days from the feast of St. Martin next ensuing, at  
"the furthest. Coins were struck by virtue of this grant, for some  
"of the halfpennies have come down to these times. They read  
"EDWARDVS on the obverse, and on the reverse VILLA RADINGY,  
"with the scallop in one quarter of the cross, like the pennies  
"which were struck in the reign of Edward I. None of the  
"farthings have as yet been discovered."

Hawkins<sup>1</sup>, under the heading of King Edward I., speaks of pennies being coined at Reading. There is also, he says, "a half-



Obverse.



Reverse.

**Silver Penny.**

Obverse.



Reverse.

**Silver Halfpenny.****FIG. XVI.—Coins struck at the Abbey.**

"penny of this town, which is remarkable for the star in the legend  
"of the obverse; and after VILLA, like the London one of Edward I.,  
"but which, from the style of work and want of drapery, appears  
"to belong to Edward III." Under the heading of Edward III.,  
he speaks of halfpennies being struck at Reading, and gives figures  
of them.

Grueber<sup>2</sup> describes both the silver penny and halfpenny of

<sup>1</sup> "Silver Coins of England," pp. 200-202, 210 (Plate xxiv., Fig. 315).

<sup>2</sup> "Handbook of the Coins of Great Britain and Ireland in the British Museum,"

Edward III<sup>1</sup>, as being struck at Reading. They are distinguished from the ordinary pennies of the time, not merely by the legend VILLA RADINGY, but also by a scallop in the first quarter of the reverse.

In the British Museum collection of coins, a silver penny and two silver halfpennies (slightly different) of this reign are to be found (Fig. XVI.).

*Obverse*: EDW. R. ANGL. DNS. HIB.—Bust facing, crowned.

*Reverse*: VILLA RADINGY.—Long cross pattée, dividing legend; in one angle of the cross is an escaloop shell, in the others are three pellets.

The weight of the penny is 15·8 grains; that of the two varieties of halfpenny 10·2 and 7·7 grains respectively.

<sup>1</sup> “Considerable difficulty has hitherto existed in separating the pence, half-pence and farthings of Edward I., II. and III. . . .” “The pennies reading ‘Edw’ and without stops after the words may be assigned to Edward I.; those reading ‘Edwa, Edwar and Edward,’ also without stops after the words, to Edward II.; and those with ‘Edw, Edwa, Edward and Edwardus’ usually with stops, annulets or saltires, to Edward III. These general rules do not apply to halfpence and farthings” (Grueber, *loc. cit.*, p. 43; cf. also *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1898, pp. 8-72).





## Chapter ix.

### *The Library of the Abbey.*

OST of the valuable documents and manuscripts belonging to the Abbey were either dispersed or destroyed at the Dissolution. But some have survived, and in the British Museum, Bodleian Library and elsewhere, are preserved a number of MSS., some of which were transcribed by the monks on parchment or vellum, and embellished with delightful paintings and fanciful miniatures in gold, blue, green, red and other colours. The two accompanying illustrations (Figs. XVII., XVIII.), taken from Reading MSS. in the Bodleian<sup>1</sup>, will give some idea of the style of caligraphy, illumination and miniature; but only an inspection of the originals can give an adequate impression of the rich colour effects.

It is interesting to compare the art of the illuminator at Reading with that at other monasteries of the same period, or with such specimens as are reproduced in Noel Humphreys' "Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages," and the dates appended to the MSS. will facilitate such a comparison.

Some of the bindings of the MSS. are also worthy of notice. Thus the Fingall Cartulary is bound in oak boards covered with white leather, and, when shut, is fastened by a strong leather strap, which closes upon a brass clasp let into the middle of the right side of the cover.

The monks were by no means narrow in their range of study.

<sup>1</sup> MS. Bodl. 257 and MS. Laud. Misc. 91.

In addition to Theology, they studied History (national as well as ecclesiastical), Mathematics, Astronomy, Music, Law and the *chefs d'œuvres* of Pagan authors.

The famous Rota "Sumer is icumen in," which has been described as "the most remarkable ancient musical composition in 'existence,'" although composed by a North-countryman, probably a Northumbrian, was first written down<sup>1</sup> at Reading Abbey about the year 1225.

The melody, sweet and pastoral in character, is sung by four equal voices, following each other regularly at intervals of four bars, with two additional parts forming a "Pes" or ground-bass (*basso obstinato*). Not only is this composition the earliest canon known, but it also offers the first example of a ground-bass<sup>2</sup>. The original MS., of which the accompanying illustration (Fig. XIX.) is a facsimile, is still preserved in the British Museum (Harl. MSS., No. 978). The following are the quaint words of the Rota :

" Sumer is icumen in,  
     " Lhude sing Cuccu !  
     " Growtheth sed, and bloweth med  
         " And springth the wde nu,  
             " Sing Cuccu !  
     " Awe bleteth after lomb  
         " Lhouth after calle cu ;  
     " Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth,  
         " Murie sing Cuccu,  
             " Cuccu, Cuccu !  
     " Wel singes thu Cuccu  
         " Ne swik thu naver nu."

The MSS. were written in a variety of languages, including Latin, French and English, and present many of those interesting entries which monks were so fond of introducing on fly-leaves. Some entries record the names of donors, others the cost of the MS., while yet another tells how the volume had the unusual

<sup>1</sup> Various authorities have stated that the transcriber was a monk of Reading named John of Fornsete. But Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, Bodley's librarian, points out that this statement is merely based on the fact that a prayer for John of Fornsete occurs in the margin of the Reading Calendar, which the same transcriber has written later in the volume.

<sup>2</sup> Further details will be found in Groves' "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," Vol. iii., p. 765, and Vol. iv., p. 1, and in Naumann's "History of Music," ed. by Ouseley, Vol. i., p. 221.

EA

TUS

VIR Q NON

ABIIT

IN CON

SILIO

IMPIORVM.

**E**DHO H̄O ih̄o x̄po. Hoc est  
homine dñico accipiendū est beat⁹ vir q̄  
non abit in consilio impiū. sicut homo  
trei quixori consensit decepte a serpen-  
te. ut dei p̄cepta p̄teriret. **E**t in via pec-  
catorū hoh stetit. Q̄ uia uenit quidē  
in uia peccatorū nascendo sicut peccatores.  
sed n̄ stetit. q̄a n̄ cū uenit illecebra secu-  
laris. **E**t in cathedra pestilennie  
hoh sedet. Noluit regnū tñnu cū sup-  
bia. que cathedra pestilencie ideo rec-  
te intelligit. q̄a n̄ fere dñscit. & dñscit.

FIG. XVII.—Illuminated Manuscript.



experience of being stolen and eventually restored. Evidently at Reading benefactions to the Abbey not uncommonly took the form of gifts to the Library.

**CATALOGUE OF MSS. FORMERLY BELONGING TO READING ABBEY, AND NOW PRESERVED IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM<sup>1</sup>.**

No. of MS.	Title.	Language, Date, Number of Leaves, Size and Binding.	Notes as to Illumination, Donor and Price.
Royal 1 C. iii.* <sup>2</sup>	Bible, Vol. i. (Genesis to Tobias).	French, early fourteenth century ; ff. 1 <sup>x</sup> , 315, in double columns ; leaf measurement, 14 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> × 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in. ; binding, white vellum.	Initials in blue and red.
Royal 3 A. iv. <sup>†3</sup>	Paschasius Radbertus, Commentary on Lamentations, in five books.	Latin, twelfth century ; ff. 2 <sup>x</sup> , 121 ; 10 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub> × 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in. ; binding, brown leather, blind-tooled.	Two fine illuminated initials (ff. 1, 1b).
Royal 3 A. vi.*	Michael Meldensis, Commentary (" Distinctions ") on the Psalter. Abb o, Latin verses, with prose Prologue.	Latin, thirteenth century ; ff. 1 <sup>x</sup> , 109 ; 10 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub> × 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in. ; binding, white vellum.	Initials in red and blue.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Mr. J. A. Herbert, Assistant in the Department of MSS., for help in compiling this Catalogue.

<sup>2</sup> This \* indicates that the words "Hic est liber Sancte Marie de Radingia quem qui celaverit, vel fraudem de eo fecerit, anathema sit," or other words implying ownership, occur in the MS.

<sup>3</sup> This † denotes that the MS. is probably included in the Catalogue of the Library at Reading Abbey in the thirteenth century, which is found in the Fingall Cartulary, and reprinted in the *English Historical Review*, Vol. iii., p. 117.

No. of MS.	Title.	Language, Date, Number of Leaves, Size and Binding.	Notes as to Illumination, Donor and Price.
Royal 3 A. xiv.*	Master William Kyngushome, English Dominican, Notes on Seven Chapters of Ecclesiastes.	Latin, fifteenth century ; ff. 1 <sup>x</sup> , 70, double columns ; 11 x 7 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> inches ; binding, white vellum.	Given to Reading Abbey by Brother John Wokyngham.
Royal 4 C. vi.*	Commentary on the Book of Wisdom. (Name of scribe, John Lutton. Colophon, "Quis scriptum Jon Lutton est sibi nomen. Dignus est operarius mercede sua," f. 215.)	Latin, end of the fourteenth century ; ff. 1 <sup>x</sup> , 227, double columns ; 14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> x 9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in.	Initials in red and blue. On f. 1 is an initial containing a miniature (Virgin and Child, with adoring monk in margin), also a full border with the arms of Reading Abbey (azure, three escallops or) and of the donor, Thomas Besford (gules, a bar between six pears or). On f. 1 <sup>x</sup> b., "Hunc liberum dedit frater Thomas Besforde Monachus Radingie ffratribus claustralibus Ad studendum. quem qui alienaverit vel fecerit vel violaverit. Anathema sit. Pre cium lx\$. Orate pro anima eius."
Royal 7 E. ix.*	(Gul. Durandus) "Rationale Divinorum Officiorum."	Latin, fourteenth century ; ff. 210 ; 13 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> x 9 in., double columns.	Initials in red and blue.
Royal 8 C. ix.*†	The "Historia Scholastica" of Petrus	Latin, thirteenth century ; ff.	Coloured initials; many headings in green.

**A**mantissimo dño & patri Bartholomeo dī grana  
exoniensi epo. Balde&vñ fordeñis monasterij  
seruus. etiam in dño salutē. Reuerenda nomina  
magistri dñi. & patris. singula uis suū ī me  
ueudicant t. & multaplici necessitate obedi-  
endi penē precepunt me m. ut meus nō  
sum s; tuus. cui post dñm meipsū debeo m  
eo qd' sum & qd' possum. Utq; in ipsa obe-  
diendi necessitate libera est uoluntas  
mea à necessitate cū necessitas cedat  
uoluntati. non uoluntas necessitati. Ex uoluntate em̄. ē. necessita-  
rium. qd' non ē. ex necessitate uoluntariū. Hec autē libertas  
restituit me m. ut meus sim licet tuus. & plus nūs quā tuus.  
plus enim compos sum uota mei. cum tue obedio uoluntati. Gi-  
moi em̄ & amo i. ex utroq; mixta reverentia. iam p̄dem optimue-  
runt cor meū. ut de libatū habem̄ n̄ negare qd' uelles. n̄ reu-  
re qd' intumgēres. Veritamen cū aut̄ vntas tua mē p̄mert &  
caritas urget. ut de mestimabili saſticio ueritatis aliq; sc̄ben-  
da dictarem. & dictata scribam ad edificationē fidei p̄futura.  
in disceptatione cogitationū mearū ita mente dimis̄ sum.  
ut timens non obediere. multo magis timerem & obedire. Itaq;  
enim certi p̄iculi met̄ me attabat. s; qd' magis n̄ p̄iculorum.  
& hoc & michi magis met̄icorum. Rē enī magna ē. & lon-  
ge sup̄ me. & quom̄ potero ad eam. p̄fundū sacram̄tum sacro  
uel amne tectum. ineffabile. incogitabile. incomprehensibile. qd'  
ego sum ut casto & puro sermone sicut oportet. decet & expe-  
dit. eloqui sufficiam. Nam ad tante p̄funditatis caligine.

FIG. XVIII.—Illuminated Manuscript.



No. of MS.	Title.	Language, Number of Leaves, Size and Binding.	Notes as to Illumination, Donor and Price.
	Comestor (a paraphrase of Bible history), preceded and followed by various theological notes and treatises.	198; 9 x 6 in.; binding, white vellum.	
Royal 8 E. xviii.	Smaragdus, "Diamēta Monachorum"; followed by brief annals from 1066 to 1189, with entries concerning Reading Abbey from 1121.	Latin, end of twelfth century; ff. 96; 9 x 6½ in.; binding, white vellum.	Initials red and green; the connection with Reading Abbey shown by entries in the annals.
Royal 9 C. iii.*	Gratian, Decretals, with commentary by Bartholomew of Brescia.	Latin, text thirteenth, commentary fourteenth century; ff. 1x, 288; 14½ x 10¾ in.; text in double columns, commentary in margins.	Initials red and blue. At the beginning is a large illuminated initial in gold, green, blue and red; at the end are two illuminated pages of tables of consanguinity and affinity.
Royal 9 F. iii.*	Pope Innocent IV., <i>Commentary</i> ("Apparatus") on the Five Books of Decretals. ( <i>Colophon</i> , "Explicit iste liber sit scriptor criminis liber").	Latin, fourteenth century; ff. 1x, 309; 15¾ x 10½ in.; double columns.	Initials blue, flourished in red; a large ornamental initial at the beginning of each book. On f. 1x, "Hic est liber Innocentii quarti. Ecclesie sancte Marie Rading' per fratrem Henricum de Graye."
Royal 10 C. iii.*†	Treatises on Canon Law and Theology.	Latin, thirteenth century; ff. 174; 13¾ x 8½ in.	Initials in red and blue. On f. 1b, "De Claustro."

No. of MS.	Title.	Language, Date, Number of Leaves, Size and Binding.	Notes as to Illumination, Donor and Price.
Royal 10 D. x.*	"Summa Summarum," or "Speculum Juris Canonici," a digest of the five Books of Decretals; followed by a treatise defending the use of images, and by the thirty-seven Conclusions of John Brut, a Herefordshire Lollard, condemned by the Bishop of Hereford, October 6, 1393.	Latin, late fourteenth century; ff. 1 <sup>x</sup> , 31 <sup>2</sup> , double columns; 17 <sup>1</sup> <sub>2</sub> × 11 <sup>3</sup> <sub>4</sub> in.	Full borders and ornamental initials in gold and colours on ff. 1 and 3, the former somewhat rubbed; similar initials and partial borders at the beginning of Books II.-V.
Royal 11 A. xvii.*	Master Thomas of Capua, Cardinal, "Ars Dictaminum": a treatise on letter-writing, consisting mainly of examples of various kinds of letters.	Latin, fourteenth century; ff. 1 <sup>x</sup> , 107; 8 <sup>5</sup> <sub>8</sub> × 5 <sup>5</sup> <sub>8</sub> in.	Initials blue and red on f. 106b, "Johannes permissione divina abbas Monasterii Radyng."
Royal 11 C. ii.*	"Apparatus" or "Repertorium" on the Sixth Book of Decretals, composed in 1298 by Cardinal Joannes Monachus.	Latin; about the middle of the fifteenth century; ff. 195, double columns; 13 <sup>1</sup> <sub>2</sub> × 9 in. (except f. 193, an insertion on a small slip); binding, white vellum.	Initials blue, flourished in red. Title and colophon (ff. 1 <sup>b</sup> , 194) state that the volume was given [to Christ Church, Canterbury?] by Dom. Thomas Chylen, "Doctor in Decretis," and monk of Christ Church, Canterbury, in 1384. [He was Prior in 1391.] The MS. is, however, clearly of a later date, so that we must suppose this



FIG. XIX.—*Sumer is icumen in.*



No. of MS.	Title.	Language, Date, Number of Leaves, Size and Binding.	Notes as to Illumination, Donor and Price.
Royal 11 C. iii.*	Digest or Pandects of Justinian; in twenty-four books, with marginal and (occasionally) interlinear glosses.	Latin; early thirteenth century; ff. 250; $14\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$ in.; double columns.	statement to have been copied by the scribe from the earlier MS. from which he derived the text. On f. 195, "Hic est liber sancte Marie Radyng' ex acquisitione ffratris Thome Chilmark. Deus sibi propicietur. Amen dicant omnes."
Royal 11 C. xi.*	Constitutions of Pope Clement V., and other treatises and notes on Canon Law, including the "Reper-	Latin; fourteenth century; ff. 236; $15\frac{1}{4} \times 9$ in.; double columns, with marginal com-	Ornamental initials at the principal divisions; simple red, green, or blue initials throughout. Bound at Oxford for Richard of Reading (but the present binding is modern): see f. 1b, "Istum librum Oxonie fecit Ricardus de Redyng' ligari quem qui alienaverit a Monasterio Radynge fundato in honorem gloriose virginis Marie et beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli Johannis atque Jacobi vel in eo fraudem fecerit anathema sit."

*Reading Abbey.*

No. of MS.	Title.	Language, Date, Number of Leaves, Size and Binding.	Notes as to Illumination, Donor and Price.
	torium" of Gul. Durandus.	mentary in the first part.	another miniature- initial and border on f. 1. Small illumin- ated initials through- out, but poorly exe- cuted. Given to Reading Abbey by Thomas Erleye.
Royal 12 F. xix.*	Logical Treatises, by Walter de Burley and others.	Latin; four- teenth century, with some fif- teenth century additions; ff. 187, mostly double col- umns; $11\frac{7}{8} \times$ $8\frac{1}{4}$ in.	Initials red and blue. Given to Reading Abbey by Brother William de Harle- stone. On f. 1b, "Istum librum dedit frater Willelmus de Harlestone Clastra- libus in claustrō. quem qui alienaverit. vel scienter vio- laverit. anathema sit."
Harley 330.*	Walter Hilton's "Scala spiritualis Perfectionis" and "Imago Dei Homo," and Rich- ard Rolle of Ham- pole's "Tractatus de Nomine Jhesu."	English and Latin; fif- teenth century; ff. 1 <sup>x</sup> , 13 <sup>2</sup> ; double col- umns; $9\frac{1}{4} \times 6$ in.	Initials red and blue. On f. 52, "Hic est liber monasterii Beate Marie Ra- dingie ex dono Wil- lelmi Wargrave dicti monasterii Monachi. Anno Domini Mil- lesimo cccc <sup>o</sup> lxxx. xv <sup>o</sup> . precium libri vi <sup>s</sup> et viii."
Harley 651.*†	Chronicles of Euse- bius, Jerome, Prosper, Sigebert of Gembloux, Ro- bert of Torigny, Henry of Hun- tingdon, etc.	Latin; twelfth century, with a d d i t i o n s, partly English, fifteenth and sixteenth cen- turies; ff. 196; $13\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ in.	Coloured initials.

No. of MS.	Title.	Language, Date, Number of Leaves, Size and Binding.	Notes as to Illumination, Donor and Price.
Harley 979.*	"Ysagoge magistri Hugonis [de S. Victore?] in evidentiam Theologie"; Robert Grosseteste, Sermon on the Decalogue and "Templum Domini"; Pope Innocent III., "Tractatus de Contemptu Mundi"; and other theological pieces.	Latin; about 1300; ff. 2 <sup>x</sup> , 83; 7 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub> x 6 in.; partly double, partly single, columns.	Ornamental initials in red and blue.
Harley 978.	Hymns, with music (including "Sumer is icumen in"); Calendar (only Jan. and Feb. completed); Treatises on Health; Fables and Lays of Marie de France; Satires, in verse; Narrative of the Battle of Lewes (1264), in verse; Legend of Becket's parentage.	Mostly Latin and French, partly English; the first part about 1240, the rest in various thirteenth-century hands, except ff. 17 <sup>b</sup> - 19, where the writing is late fourteenth century; ff. 162, mostly in double columns; 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> x 5 in.	Coloured initials. No direct mark of ownership; but the entries in the Calendar include obits of Abbots Roger, Jan. 19 (died 1164); Auscherius, Jan. 27 (died 1135); Reginald, Feb. 3 (died 1158); Joseph, Feb. 8 (died about 1180); Simon, Feb. 13 (died 1226); Gervase the Sacristan, Jan. 24; and Osbert the Dean, Feb. 21, all of which are in the Calendar prefixed to the Reading Cartulary in Cotton. MS., Vespasian E. v. (but Roger is entered there on Jan. 20).
Cotton. Vespasian E. v.	Cartulary of Reading Abbey, with	Latin; middle of the thirteenth	Initials in red and blue. The Calendar con-

*Reading Abbey.*

No. of MS.	Title.	Language, Date, Number of Leaves, Size and Binding.	Notes as to Illumination, Donor and Price.
	Calendar pre-fixed.	century, with additions, thirteenth to fifteenth centuries; ff. 81; $8\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ in.	tains the entry, "Dedicatio ecclesie Rading" on April 19, and many obits of officials and benefactors of the Abbey.
Cotton. Vespasian E. xxv.	Cartulary of Reading Abbey (index of places prefixed).	Latin; middle of the fourteenth century; ff. 231; $9\frac{5}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ in.	A few red initials.
Cotton. Domitian A. iii.	Chronicle of the Kings of England to 1299, by Peter de Icham. Cartulary of Reading Abbey, containing a number of deeds relating specially to the dependent Priory of Leominster.	Latin; fourteenth century, with some fifteenth-century additions to the Cartulary; ff. 254; $8\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$ in.	Initials red and blue. Mutilated border and illuminated initial on f. 1. But the Chronicle (ff. 1-37) has probably been bound up with the Cartulary at a comparatively recent date, perhaps by Cotton himself. No mark of ownership, except Sir R. Cotton's signature on f. 1. Probably belonged to Leominster rather than to Reading itself.
Harley 82, ff. 1-3b.	Fragment of a Reading Cartulary, now bound up with various other pieces.	Latin; fourteenth century; ff. 3; $9\frac{5}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ in.	Presumably from a register compiled at Reading, but no mark of ownership.
Harley, 1708.	Cartulary of Reading Abbey.	Latin; middle of the thirteenth century, with additions thirteenth to fifteenth centuries; ff. 247; $10\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$ in.	Finely illuminated initial to the foundation Charter on f. 16; many ornamental initials in red and blue.

In the list of Reading Abbey books published in the *English Historical Review*, Vol. iii., p. 124, No. 11, is "Rotula cum vita sancti Guthlaci anglice scripta," which there is a temptation to identify with the exquisite illustrated Latin Life of St. Guthlac in the British Museum (Harley Roll, Y 6); but the "anglice scripta" makes that impossible.

**CATALOGUE OF MSS. FORMERLY BELONGING TO READING ABBEY, AND NOW PRESERVED IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY OR IN THE OXFORD COLLEGES<sup>1</sup>.**

I. BODLEIAN.

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Auct. D. 3, 12.*†	Leviticus, cum glossis ex Hesychio, Origene, Rabano, Isidoro, etc.	Latin; twelfth century; vellum, $10\frac{1}{8}$ $\times 6\frac{3}{4}$ in., 100 leaves, rubrics, a few coloured initials; binding, oak boards covered with calf, strings wanting.	
Bodl. 125.†	Oddonis Abbatis Cluniacensis Collationum libri tres.	Latin; twelfth century; vellum, $9\frac{7}{8} \times 7$ in., 98 leaves, rubrics, ornamental and coloured initials; binding oak boards covered with white sheepskin, chain-clasp wanting.	On first fly-leaf, "Liber oddonis abbatis."
Bodl. 730.	Regula Johannis Cassiani, et decem Collationes ejusdem.	Latin; twelfth century; vellum, $12\frac{1}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ in., 146 leaves, rubrics, ornamental	On fly leaf at beginning, "Liber Sancte Marie"; an erasure fol-

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Mr. George Parker, Assistant in the Bodleian Library, for assistance in compiling this list.

*Reading Abbey.*

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Auct. D. 3, 15.*†	Regum libri quatuor, cum glossis.	and coloured initials; binding, oak boards covered with white sheep-skin, clasps wanting.	lows this note. ? Reading MS.
Bodl. 781.*	Annotationes breves in Psalmos, Canticum Esaiæ, etc.	Latin; thirteenth century, first half ; vellum, $12\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$ in., 251 leaves, coloured and ornamental initials, few rubrics; binding, oak boards, covered with sheep-skin (?) stained brown, strings wanting.	Latin, twelfth century, first half ; vellum, $10 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ in., 50 leaves, rubrics, red initials.
Laud. Misc. 79.*	Haimonis Halberstadiensis Expositio in S. Johannis Apocalypsin. A mass for the dead, excerpts from Isidore and Augustine, the Gospel of Nicodemus, prayers and treatises of St. Anselm, etc., follow.	Latin and French, nearly all twelfth century, first half ; vellum, $10\frac{1}{8} \times 7$ in., 149 leaves, some rubrics, coloured initials.	“Hic liber ut a senioribus audi- vimus per lat- tones ablatus est circa annum domini Millesi- mum cccc <sup>m</sup> et LXXX <sup>um</sup> . postea vero Willelmus Wargrave cum apud leomun- striam moraretur hunc librum a quodam gener- oso pro xs. ix <sup>d</sup> . redemit et ut potestis cernere ad monasterium iterum reduxit.”

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Auct. D. 4, 6 <sup>1</sup> .	Psalterium, cum glossa; Cantica reliqua, cum glossa; Benedicite, Te Deum, etc.	Latin; 1158-64 (?); vellum, $6\frac{3}{4} \times 5$ in., 155 leaves, coloured and illuminated initials.	Note on fly-leaf at end: "Capella beate Marie Radungie cepit edificari per reverendum patrem nycholaum abbatem xiii Kal. Mai anno domini M.CCC <sup>mo</sup> XIII <sup>o</sup> ."
Bodl. 197.*	Æthelredus vel AElredus Rievallensis de xi. oneribus Esaiæ, sermonibus 31; Idem de spirituali amicitia. Several treatises of Arnold, Abbot of Bonneval, follow.	Latin; twelfth century, late (?); vellum, $12\frac{1}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ in., 215 leaves, rubrics, ornamental initials; binding, oak boards covered with stamped calf, chain-clasp wanting.	
Bodl. 257.*†	Augustini Expositio in Psalmos — viz., in primam quinquagenam.	Latin; twelfth century, second half; vellum, $16\frac{1}{4} \times 12$ in., 193 leaves, ornamental and illuminated initials; binding, oak boards covered with stamped calf, clasps wanting.	
Bodl. 241.*†	Augustini Expositio in Psalmos, incipiens a 119, pergit ad finem Psalterii.	Latin; twelfth century, second half; vellum, $14\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{3}{4}$ in., 188 leaves, rubrics, ornamental and coloured in-	

<sup>1</sup> This MS. appears to have been written for Abbot Roger, whose name is introduced by the scribe John into the large initial D on fol. 91 of the MS., and whose period was A.D. 1158-64. An illustration of the initial D has been published by the Palæographical Society (Series ii., Plate 132).

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Bodl. 550.*	Alexandri Neckam Corrogationes Promethei. De singularis libris S. Bibliorum aliquæ dictiones quarum accentus aut significatio observari debet; deinde et Novi Testamenti libri similiter sequuntur. Expositio in Cantica Canticorum. (Various theological treatises etc.)	Latin; twelfth century, late (?); vellum, $9\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$ in., 152 leaves, rubrics, red and green initials; binding, oak boards covered with white sheepskin, strings and chain-clasp wanting.	
Digby 148.*†	Hugonis de Sancto Victore liber de Sacramentis Christianæ fidei.	Latin; twelfth century, second half; vellum, $9\frac{5}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{8}$ in., 143 leaves, rubrics, coloured initials.	
Laud. Misc. 725.*†	Johannis Cassiani de institutis Cœnobiorum libri quatuor et de octo vitiorum remediis libri octo. Roberti Canuti, Crecoladensis, de conubio patriarchæ Jacob libri tres.	Latin; twelfth century, second half; vellum, $10\frac{1}{4} \times 7$ in., 184 leaves, rubrics, ornamental and illuminated initials.	
Auct. D. 2, 12.*†	Liber duodecim prophetarum Hoseæ, Joelis etc., cum glossis.	Latin; thirteenth century; vellum, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ in., 91 leaves, rubrics, ornamental red and	

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Digby B.N. 11.*†	<p>Actus Apostolorum glossati.          Excerpta e capp. 1-25 libri i. Elucidarii S. Anselmi, sive Honorii Augustodunensis.          Tractatus magistri Alani Porretani de modo predicationis. Excerpta e sermonibus, etc.</p>	<p>blue initials ; binding, oak boards covered with calf, strings wanting.</p> <p>Latin : thirteenth century ; vellum, <math>9\frac{5}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{2}</math> in., 120 leaves, rubrics, red and blue initials.</p>	<p>On a leaf at the end is this note : " Hii sunt libri quos dominus R. supprior accepit in deposito a magistro H. de mar', scilicet, In uno volumine Actus Apostolorum et sermones secundum magistrum Alanum porretanum. In alio Daalogi (<i>sic</i>) Gregorii. In tercio Exameron Ambrosii. In iii. Epistole canonicales et sermones, Merlinus, Apocalipsis, et post sermones. In v. Cantica cantorum et liber eclesiastes. Hos omnes tradet vel faciet magistro Ricardo de Cicestria vel prefato magistro H. de mar' [<i>sic</i>] vel tali quem unus illorum per certa insignia (<i>sic</i>) pro eius miserit. Teste R. de straford' canonico."</p>

## Reading Abbey.

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Digby 200.*	Tractatus venerabilis Ricardi de Sancto Victore super quosdam psalmos. (Other treatises by the same.)	Latin ; thirteenth century, first half ; vellum, $12\frac{1}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ in., 108 leaves, rubrics, red and blue initials, first initial illuminated.	On one of the fly-leaves at the end : “Radulfus bathe monachus sacerdos et professus iurat in verbis sacerdotii quod observabit consuetudines et statuta ecclesie radingensis. Testante domino iohanne thorne monacho eiusdem loci.”
Laud Misc. 91.*	Thomæ Balduini, monachi Fordensis, postea archiep. Cantuar., liber de Sacramento Altaris, cum prologo ad Bartholomæum, ep. Exoniensem.	Latin and French ; thirteenth century, first and second halves ; vellum, $11\frac{5}{8} \times 8$ in., 236 leaves, rubrics, ornamental and illuminated initials.	
Rawl. A. 375.*	Flores concionatorii ; sive materiæ pro sermonibus, partim ad dies quosdam Dominicos et festos assignatis.	Latin ; thirteenth century, first half ; vellum, $10\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$ in., 128 leaves, rubrics ; binding, oak boards covered with sheepskin, chain-clasp wanting.	
Auct. F. 3, 8.*	Methodus brevis et compendiosus de nominum differentia ; interseritur etiam de verbis. Lectiones super Prisciani lib. de arte grammatica.	Latin ; thirteenth and fourteenth centuries ; vellum, $10\frac{1}{8} \times 7$ in., 54 leaves, rubrics, coloured initials.	On second fly-leaf, “Hunc librum dedit frater Alwredus de douera deo et ecclesie beate Marie Rading.”
Bodl. 200.*	Quartus liber Senten-	Latin ; late thirteenth	On fly-leaf at be-

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
	tiarum secundum fratrem Thomam de Alquino.	century ; vellum, $12\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$ in., 356 leaves, ornamental and coloured initials, blue and red border round first page; binding, cardboard covered with sheepskin stained brown (?); strings and chain - clasp wanting.	ginning, "Ex dono Wilhelmi de Boxclaustralibus Radingie cuius anime propicetur deus. Amen."
Bodl. 397.*†	Excerpta Sententiuarum secundum Magistrum Hugonem de Sancto Victore. Excerpta Historiarum Veteris Testamenti per eundem. Historia Evangelii per eundem.	Latin ; late thirteenth century ; vellum, $10\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$ in., 126 leaves, rubrics, red and blue initials.	
Bodl. 772.*	Commentarii in Psalterium et Evangelium S. Johannis.	Latin ; late thirteenth century ; vellum, $9\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$ in., 116 leaves, rubrics, red and blue initials ; binding, oak boards covered with white sheepskin, strings and chain - clasp wanting.	
Bodl. 848.*	Definitiones quaedam, imperf., viz. Astronomiae, Arithmeticae, Geometriae, etc. Anselmus Cantuariensis in libro de duabus beatitudinibus et duabus miseriis.	Latin ; thirteenth century, late (?); vellum, $9 \times 6$ in., 197 leaves, rubrics, red and blue initials.	On fly-leaf at beginning, "Hic est liber sancte Marie de rading' ex dono fratriis W. de Wint."

## Reading Abbey.

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Bodl. 713.*	Hugonis de Sancto Victore capita aliquot de Archa Morali. Tractatus Magistri Poriani Alani de modo prædicationis. Nonnulla de vitiis capitalibus et eorum remediis. Tractatus beati Augustini de spiritu et anima. (Various other treatises, sermons etc.)		
Auct. F. inf. 1, 2.*	Thomas Tarent super librum tertium Sententiarum.	Latin ; fourteenth or end of thirteenth century(?) ; vellum, $12\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ in., 15 <sup>2</sup> leaves, rubrics, blue initials.	On first fly-leaf : "Precium una Marca quia sic emptus est Oxon."
Bodl. 570.*	Richardi Armachani de pauperie Salvatoris libri septem. Libellus sermonum. (Many treatises of St. Augustine and others follow.)	Latin ; c. 1340-50 ; vellum, $14\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ in., 401 leaves, blue and red initials ; binding, oak boards covered with white sheepskin, clasps wanting.	Inside top cover : "Collectarium ex dono Domini Thome Erle Abbatis Claustralibus Rading."
	Petri Blesensis epistolæ cxi. Thomæ Aquinatis quæstiones 138 super librum secundum Sententiarum.	Latin ; fifteenth century ; vellum, $10 \times 7$ in., 228 leaves, rubrics, ornamental border round first page, red and blue initials.	On fly-leaf opposite fol. 1, "Hunc librum Thomas staunton Prior Monasterii Radyng' dedit Claustralibus Radyng'. . . ."

II. OXFORD COLLEGES.

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Corpus Christi Coll., No. 45.	Alexandri Neckham, Verolamensis, Commentarius in libros Genesin et Ecclesiasten, sive de naturis rerum libri quinque.	Latin ; twelfth cen- tury ; vellum, folio, 186 leaves.	At the beginning, “ Hunc librum dedit frater Ni- cholaus de Piche- cote Deo et beate Virgini Marie et conventui de Ra- dinge.”
Corpus Christi Coll., Nos. 23, 24.	S. Johannis Chrysos- tomi in S. Matthæi Evangelium homiliæ nonaginta.	Greek ; written by John Serbopyll <sup>1</sup> at the town of Read- ing in the years 1499 and 1500 ; folio, vellum, now divided into two vol- umes, of which the first has 332 leaves, the other 294.	(? a Reading MS.)
Trinity Coll., No. 19.*	De vita activa et con- templativa liber, præcipue ex S. Gre- gorii operibus con- fectus. Interpretationes He- braicorum nominum. Tractatus de spirituali et vera amicitia. Distinctionum liber theologicarum. Commentarius in Canticum Canti- corum. (Many sermons etc. follow.)	Latin ; twelfth and thirteenth centur- ies ; vellum, small folio, 205 leaves.	“ Liber S. Marie de Radingis ex dono Radulphi de Symmoc, quondam prioris ejusdem loci ; de quo qui frau- dem fecerit noverit se excom- municatum.”

<sup>1</sup> This John Serbopoulos came from Constantinople and was copying Greek MSS. at Reading. Gasquet, “The English Bible,” p. 318.

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
Queen's Coll., No. 317.*†	SS. Matthæi et Marci Evangelia, cum glossis.	Latin; twelfth cen- tury, second half; vellum, folio, 143 leaves.	
Queen's Coll., No. 323.*†	S. Lucæ evangelium, glossa marginali, et hic illic interlineari, instructum.	Latin; twelfth cen- tury, second half; vellum, quarto, 114 leaves.	
St. John's Coll., No. 21.*	Libri Josuæ et Judi- cum, glossa in- structi ordinaria.	Latin; thirteenth cen- tury, second half; vellum, folio, 85 leaves.	
St. John's Coll., No. 104.*	Liber Moysis, qui vocatur Deutero- nomium, glossa in- structus ordinaria.	Latin; thirteenth cen- tury, first half; vellum, small folio, 108 leaves.	
Magdalen Coll., No. 25.	Compendium theo- logicæ veritatis secundum sanctum Thomam (potius Petrum Thomam, minoritam), libris septem comprehen- sum.	Latin; fifteenth cen- tury; vellum, small quarto, 234 leaves, red and blue ini- tials.	At the beginning: “ Hunc librum ue (ritatis?) dedit frater Willelmus Hendele, prior hujus monasterii Radyng, cuius alienator seu Fraudator anath- ema sit; Amen.”

THE FOLLOWING MSS. FORMERLY BELONGING TO  
READING ABBEY, ARE NOW PRESERVED AT CAMBRIDGE.

Press-mark.	Contents.	Language, Date, Description.	Notes as to Donor or Owner.
The University Library, Dd. ix. 38. <sup>1</sup>	Many documents re- lating to Reading and other monas- teries. Among them : <i>Constitutiones de Redyngg.</i> <i>Carta Regis Henrici primi de funda- tione Radyng. Ec- clesiae et libertati- bus, et de donatione ipsius Radyng,</i> <i>Cheals et Leo- menstre, etc.</i> <i>Confirmatio Alexan- dri pape tertii super possession- ibus, ecclesiis et libertatibus monas- terio Radyng. col- latis et conferendis.</i> <i>Allocationes Abbatis Radyng. in scac- cario domini Regis.</i>	Latin and French ; fourteenth century ; vellum, folio.	
St. John's Coll., No. 22.*†	<i>Bedæ Venerabilis Presbyteri liber de Rationibus Tem- porum.</i> With other works by him and Albericus.	Quarto, vellum ; no date assigned to MS. in printed catalogue.	

<sup>1</sup> Further details will be found in the "Catalogue of Manuscripts preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge," Vol. i., pp. 390-401, where it is entitled "a parchment volume containing books or parts thereof, which formerly belonged to the monastery at Reading . . . by various hands in the fourteenth century."

### OTHER MSS. FORMERLY CONNECTED WITH READING ABBEY.

Another important MS. is that in the possession of Lord Fingall<sup>1</sup>, and known as the Fingall or Woollascot MS. Attached to the fly-leaf is the following memorandum : " This book of the " Charters of Reading Abbey was found secreted in a very con- " cealed and unknown corner in my Lord Fingall's house at " Shinefield near Reading." The volume comprises 99 folios of vellum, and begins with a table of contents giving a list of the first 315 Charters, a list of the relics, a full catalogue of the books kept at the Abbey, and an inventory of the vestments. There are also many important Bulls and writs by various Popes, including Calixtus II., Honorius II., Innocent II., Eugenius III., Adrian IV., Alexander III. and Clement III.

As the latest date of the royal Charters entered in this Cartulary appears to belong to the reign of Henry III., the several books enumerated probably formed the library<sup>2</sup> at Reading during the thirteenth century, and this explains why only a few of the surviving MSS. can be identified with this catalogue.

The following two MSS.<sup>3</sup>, probably associated with Reading Abbey, were discovered a few years ago in a cellar at Bere Court, Pangbourne, which was a summer residence of the Abbot :

1. " Horæ Beatæ Mariæ Virginis, cum Calendario," fifteenth century, by an English scribe, ornamented with bordered initial letters and numerous capitals, finely illuminated in gold and colours.

2. Second portion of Wyclif's version of the Bible, with a prefixed calendar. This MS. also contains many bordered initial letters richly illuminated.

At the sale of the library of Sir Thomas Phillips<sup>4</sup>, the " Epistola Clementis Papæ ad Jacobum Hierosolimitanum Epis- " copum," a twelfth-century MS. from the scriptorium of Reading

<sup>1</sup> A description of this cartulary by S. Barfield will be found in the *English Historical Review*, Vol. iii., p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Egginton, *Journal of Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society*, Vol. i., p. 110.

<sup>4</sup> *Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archaeological Journal*, Vol. i., p. 29.

Abbey, was sold to Mr. Quaritch for £50. Another MS. "De Quantitate Animi" by S. Augustinus, and other tracts, twelfth century, quarto, on vellum, from Reading Abbey, was also sold to Mr. Quaritch. It contained an anthem for St. James' Day, set throughout to music.

In addition to the books mentioned above as still existing, one or two in the catalogue of 228 volumes in the Fingall MS. are worthy of passing mention. Thus there were four complete Bibles, in addition to various parts of the Bible. Again, the "Consuetudines Cluniacenses," in one volume, is of interest in connection with the Cluniac origin of Reading Abbey. The works of Augustine, "De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia" and "De Adulterinis Conjugiis," may be the books sent by Hugh Faringdon<sup>1</sup> to Henry VIII., when the King was searching everywhere in England and on the Continent for authorities to support his views on matrimonial law.

It is not exactly known where the books were kept, but most likely it was in the cloisters. An excellent description of the monastic library at Durham has happily been preserved, and may be taken as a picture of what in all probability the library of Reading Abbey was : " In the north syde of the Cloister, from "the corner over against the Church dour to the corner over "against the Dorts dour, was all fynely glased, from the hight to "the sole within a litle of the grownd into the Cloister garth. "And in every wyndowe iij PEWES or CARRELLS, where every one "of the old Monks had his carrell, severall by himselfe, that, when "they had dyned, they dyd resorte to that place of Cloister and "there studyed upon there books, every one in his carrell, all the "after nonne, unto evensong tyme. This was there exercise every "daie. All there pewes or carrells was all fynely wainscotted "and verie close, all but the forepart which had carved worke "that gave light in at their carrell doures of wainscott. And in "every carrell was a deske to lye there bookees on. . . . And "over against the carrells against the church wall did stande "sertaine great almeries (or cupboards) of waynscott all full of "BOOKES<sup>2</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> "Dictionary of National Biography," *sub*. Faringdon.

<sup>2</sup> "Rites of Durham" (Surtees Society), p. 70.

Reading Abbey, like other great abbeys, was occasionally entrusted with the custody of national archives. For example, in 1207 documents relating to the marriage of Louis, Count of Los, and the daughter of Adelheid, Countess of Holland<sup>1</sup>, were placed there for safe keeping.

<sup>1</sup> Gasquet, "The English Bible," p. 59.





## Chapter x.

### *The Relics, Plate and other Treasures belonging to the Abbey.*

#### I. *Relics.*

THE reputed remains of holy men or of martyrs ranked amongst the chief treasures of a religious house during the Middle Ages, and at Reading, as elsewhere, were regarded with profound veneration. In fact, the reputation of the Abbey may, in a measure, be attributed to its relics, and these again, by attracting pilgrims from far and near, proved no unimportant a source of wealth.

The list of relics mentioned in the Cartulary belonging to the Earl of Fingall comprises 234 separate entries, and is classified according to the persons with whom the relics were connected<sup>1</sup>.

Amongst them are :

#### 1. *Relics relating to our Lord :*

A cross brought from Constantinople, gilt with the gold offered to Christ.

His foreskin, which the Emperor Constantine is stated to have sent to King Henry I.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Barfield, *English Historical Review*, Vol. iii., p. 115.

A piece of our Lord's shoe (*caliga*).

Blood and water from His side.

Several stones, pieces of rock, and earth from Bethlehem  
and other places.

2. *Relics relating to the Virgin Mary :*

Some of her hair, "as it is thought."

Parts of her garments, of her bed and of her tomb.

3. *Relics relating to the Patriarchs and Prophets :*

Parts of the rods of Moses and Aaron.

Part of the rock which Moses struck.

Manna from Mount Sinai.

Three teeth and some bones of St. Simeon.

4. *Relics of the Apostles :*

The hand of St. James and the cloth in which it was  
wrapped.

The robe of St Thomas.

A tooth of St. Luke the Evangelist.

5. *Relics of the Martyrs, Confessors and Virgins :*

The bones, the teeth, the hair, the arms, the fingers<sup>1</sup>, and  
the heads of many of them.

Previous to the dissolution of the Abbey, the following report of the relics was made by Dr. John London<sup>2</sup>, the visitor appointed by King Henry VIII. to report on the monasteries : "I have "requyred of my lord Abbott the relykes of hys howse, wiche he "schewyd unto me with gudde will. I have taken an inventory "of them, and have lokkyd them upp behynde ther high awlter,

<sup>1</sup> The monetary value attached to such relics may be inferred from the fact that a finger of St. Andrew was pawned at Northampton for £40 (Froude, "History of England," Vol. iii., p. 98).

<sup>2</sup> "Letters relating to the Suppression of the Monasteries" (Camden Society), 1843, p. 226; "Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.," Vol. xiii., Part ii., No. 377.

"and have the key in my keping, and they be always redy at  
"your lordeships commaundement."

"The Inventorye off the relyques off the Howsse off Redyng":

- " Inprimis, twoo peces off the holye crosse.
- " Item, saynt James hande.
- " Item, saynt Phelype stolle (skull).
- " Item, a bone off Marye Magdelene, with other moo (more).
- " Item, saynt Anastasius is hande, with other moo.
- " Item, a pece off saynte Pancrates arme.
- " Item, a bone off saynt Quynytyns arme.
- " Item, a bone off saynt Davyde is arme.
- " Item, a bone off Marye Salomes arme.
- " Item, a bone off saynte Edwarde the Martyre is arme.
- " Item, a bone of saynt Hierome, with other moo.
- " Item, bones off saynt Stephyn, with other moo.
- " Item, a bone off saynt Blase, with other moo.
- " Item, a bone off saynt Osmonde, with other moo.
- " Item, a pece off saynt Ursula stole.
- " Item, a chowbone of saynt Ethelbold.
- " Item, bones off saynt Leodigarye and of S. Herenei.
- " Item, bones of saynt Margarett.
- " Item, bones off saynt Arnal.
- " Item, a bone off saynt Agas, with other moo.
- " Item, a bone off S. Androwe, and ij peces of his crosse.
- " Item, a bone off S. Fredyswyde.
- " Item, a bone off saynt Anne.
- " Withe many othere.

" Ther be a multitude of small bonyss, laces, stonyss, and ermyss,  
" wiche wolde occupie iiiii schetes of papyr to make particularly an  
" inventory of every part therof. They be all at your lordeschyps  
" commaundement."

Amongst these reliques the hand of St. James, presented to the  
Abbey in 1125<sup>1</sup> by the founder, was held in the greatest esteem.  
The following letter from Henry I. accompanied the gift :

" Henry, King of England and Duke of Normandy, to the  
" Abbot and Convent of Reading, greeting: Know ye that the  
" glorious hand of the blessed James the Apostle which the

<sup>1</sup> "Rex vero Anglorum Henricus præ gaudio manus beati Jacobi Apostoli fundavit nobilem abbatiam de Redinges, et eam bonis multis ditavit, et in eam manum posuit beati Jacobi Apostoli." "Chronica Rogeri de Hoveden" (Rolls Series), Vol. i., p. 181. But according to "Flores Historiarum" (Rolls Series), Vol. ii., p. 56, the Hand was not presented till 1133.

" Empress Matilda, my daughter, gave me on her return from  
 " Germany, I, at her request, send to you and grant for ever to the  
 " Church of Reading. I command you, therefore, to receive it  
 " with all veneration, and that you and your successors take care  
 " to show it in the Church of Reading all possible honour and  
 " reverence, as is due to so important a relic of so great an Apostle."

The hand seems to have been taken away again by Henry de Blois, Bishop of Winchester in 1136<sup>1</sup>, and restored to Reading Abbey in 1155<sup>2</sup>. This temporary removal may account for Higden's statement that the hand of St. James was not presented to Reading Abbey till 1156<sup>3</sup>.

This highly-prized relic was enclosed in a shrine of gold, of which it was deprived by Richard I. His successor, King John, to compensate for the loss, granted the Abbey annually a mark of gold, which Henry III. afterwards changed to ten marks of silver.

Another proof of the high estimation in which this hand was held may be found in the fact that Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury<sup>4</sup>, between 1150 and 1160, granted forty days' indulgence to pilgrims who visited the relics of St. James at Reading Abbey upon his festival, viz. viii Kal. Aug., or within the octave of the same.

In October, 1786, some workmen, while making excavations at the eastern end of the Abbey, discovered in the church-wall a left human hand, which has been regarded as the greatly prized relic of St. James, and which may have been placed there by Hugh Faringdon to save it from sacrilege.

For some years the hand was exhibited in the Museum of the Reading Philosophical Institution. Now it belongs to the Scott-Murray family of Danesfield, Bucks, and is preserved in the sacristy of St. Peter's, Marlow-on-Thames.

All the phalanges remain *in situ*, the enveloping skin being black and shrivelled, but the metacarpal bones and the tendons at the back of the hand are absent. Two or three of the carpal

<sup>1</sup> "Flores Historiarum" (Rolls Series), Vol. ii., p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> "Polychronicon" (Rolls Series), Vol. viii., p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> British Museum, Add. Charter No. 19,589 (*Cf.* also Nos. 19,598, 19,605). The ceremonial observed by the Cluniacs when the *reliquiae sanctorum* were removed from the monastery, is described in D'Achery's "Spicilegium," Vol. i., p. 698.

bones remain, and the tendons in the palm are perfect, and appear to have been torn off just above the wrist. The thumb is bent a little inwards, and the fingers are bent towards the palm. The hand, as a whole, is small and slender<sup>1</sup>.

Father John Morris, S.J., who has written a *résumé* of the history of this hand<sup>2</sup>, some years ago paid a visit to the reputed tomb of St. James at Santiago de Compostella, and ascertained that the corresponding portion of the left hand which is now at St. Peter's, Marlow, was missing from the relic at Santiago<sup>3</sup>. Father Morris, moreover, recalls the words in the Acts of the Apostles<sup>4</sup>: Herod "killed James the brother of John with the sword," and suggests that the hand was raised to protect the head at the time of martyrdom, and thus came to be amputated from the rest of the body<sup>5</sup>.

Another important relic was the skull of St. Philip the Apostle, presented to the Abbey by King John.

These relics were probably preserved in a recess behind the high altar, and the most valuable of them in the costly "casket of 'pure gold for carrying relics,'" referred to in the letter from King Edward III., which is quoted in the following section.

## II. *The Plate and other Treasures.*

Little is known in regard to the plate, jewels and other treasures in the possession of Reading Abbey, but doubtless this, like other wealthy monasteries, received from pious donors many choice gifts, such as gold and silver crucifixes, pictures, chalices and patens, objects made of ivory and crystal, and jewelled reliquaries.

The Cartulary<sup>6</sup> belonging to Lord Fingall, and probably dating from the thirteenth century, in describing the articles used for

<sup>1</sup> On this ground the relic was at one time attributed to Queen Adeliza, wife of King Henry I.

<sup>2</sup> *The Month*, Vol. xxv. (February, 1882).

<sup>3</sup> This statement is based on a private letter from Father J. Francis Drake (St. Bernard's Presbytery, Slough), to whom Father Morris communicated his discovery.

<sup>4</sup> Chapter xii., verse 2.

<sup>5</sup> Some further details will be found in *Reading Observer*, 19, viii., 1882, p. 5; *Berkshire Chronicle*, 26, x., 1833; *Reading Mercury*, 20, v., 1833; *Echo*, 12, viii., 1882.

<sup>6</sup> This Cartulary is described in the *English Historical Review*, Vol. iii., p. 113.

ecclesiastical purposes, mentions several jewelled ornaments (*monilia*), and no less than six pastoral staffs. One belonged to Abbot Symon, another, with an ivory hook, to Abbot Helias, and a third, with a horn hook, to Abbot Hugh. Of the other three, one is described "cum transverso cristallino," and the two others "absque curvamine."

Some other treasures are referred to in a letter<sup>1</sup> from Edward III. to the Abbot of Reading, dated June 4, 1338:

"Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitania, to all to whom the present letters shall come: Greeting.

"Know ye that we have received by the hands of our beloved "clerk, Edmund de la Beche, keeper of the wardrobe, from our "dearly beloved brother in Christ Richard de Maudyn, monk of "the town of Reading, from the jewelry of the Abbot, one "chalice with a paten of pure gold, weighing 37 oz. and 11 dwt., "of the value of £22 15s.; also a chalice with a paten of pure "gold, weighing ℥ 4 10 oz. 8 dwt., and worth £54 9s. od.; also a "casket of pure gold for carrying relics, in the form of a little "shrine, garnished with sapphires, oriental pearls, rubies, and "various other stones (camahut, balamitibus), weighing ℥ 20 9 oz. "7 dwt., and of the estimated value of two hundred pounds, which "the said Abbot has lent us for the furtherance of our affairs. "These chalices, patens and casket we promise faithfully to return, "or to pay the value thereof to the said Abbot. Witness my "hand at St. Edmund's, the fourth day of June, in the 12th year "of our reign."

Further allusions to the valuable and artistic treasures possessed by the Abbey belong to the time of the Dissolution. Estimates made by the Royal Commissioners, however, are hardly reliable, since, in their ignorance, they valued artistic church plate merely by its weight in ounces, and allowed exquisitely illuminated Missals and other MSS. to be sold to soap-sellers and grocers for business purposes.

Thomas Moyle, in a letter<sup>2</sup> to Cromwell, dated September 8,

<sup>1</sup> Leland, "Collectanea," Vol. i., p. 625; Rymer, "Fœdera," Vol. ii., Part ii., p. 1041.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.," Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 136.

1539, divides the plate into gold plate, silver plate, gilt plate, and white plate, the gold amounting to 89 ounces, the silver, gilt, and not gilt to  $2,645\frac{1}{4}$  ounces. Some of the tapestry and hangings were thought worthy to adorn the royal palace, and, together with the plate and vestments, were set apart for the King.

Other documents<sup>1</sup> preserved in the Record Office describe the richly decorated ecclesiastical vestments and church furniture made of "gold tyssue and baudkyn," and of red, green, white, crimson, blue, purple and other colours, which also were reserved "to the 'use of oure Sovereigne lord the Kyng.'

In Richard Pollard's account of the plate of attainted persons and places, Reading is credited with  $19\frac{1}{2}$  ounces of gold, 367 ounces of gilt plate, and 2,660 ounces of silver<sup>2</sup>. It is also stated that the Abbot put to gage to Sir W. Luke three gilt bowls of 152 ounces and six silver bowls of 246 ounces.

These brief references, however, give an inadequate idea of the treasures that so wealthy and famous an Abbey as Reading must have possessed. For some inventories and valuations of religious houses at the time of the Dissolution are still preserved in the Record Office<sup>3</sup>, and it is surprising to read of the array of sacred vessels, vestments, and other valuables owned by even obscure and minor monasteries. It is therefore a safe inference that Reading Abbey, which was not only of royal foundation, but for centuries enjoyed the favour of the monarch, and on many occasions sumptuously entertained the highest dignitaries of the realm, possessed a treasure-house well stored not only with ecclesiastical ornaments and furniture used in the services of the Sanctuary, but also with such plate as would adequately supply the table which the monarch frequently honoured with his presence.

<sup>1</sup> "Exchequer, Treasury of Receipt," *Misc. Books*, Vol. cliv., fols. 72, 73.

<sup>2</sup> "Monastic Treasures confiscated at the Dissolution," by Sir John Williams, *Abbotsford Club*, 1836, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> *Archæologia*, Vol. xliii., p. 201.



## Chapter xi.

### *The Fate of the Abbey after its Dissolution.*



O extensive has been the destruction of Reading Abbey that only by some effort of the imagination can the vast extent of the original monastic buildings and church be realised. By far the larger part has succumbed to ruthless man and to time's "effacing 'finger," and in this Chapter some description will be given of the events which caused this splendid monastery to be plundered by sacrilegious hands, blown up by gunpowder, battered by artillery, dug out as a common quarry for over two hundred years, and eventually reduced to the crumbling ruins that survive to-day.

The attainder and execution of the last Abbot, Hugh Faringdon, led to the immediate dissolution of the conventional establishment over which he ruled. By the 12th of September, 1539, the Abbey had been surrendered to the King, as is proved by a letter<sup>1</sup> dated September 21, 1539, from Sir William Penizon to Thomas Cromwell: "On the 12th September I received possession, from 'Mr. Pollard'<sup>2</sup> and other commissioners, of the Abbey of Reading

<sup>1</sup> "Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.," Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 202.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Pollard was King's Remembrancer of the Exchequer and one of the General Surveyors.

"and the demesnes as the late Abbot left them." In another letter to Sir Richard Riche<sup>1</sup>, Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations, dated September 17 at Reading, Dr. John London speaks of a "tokyn in parchement undre the covent seale from the Abbott "and convent here," which is being sent to Sir Richard Riche, and which may have been the deed of surrender.

About December 4 the survey and audit of the monastic property by Richard Pollard, Thomas Moyle, together with the receiver and auditor, appears to have begun<sup>2</sup>, when the Schedule referred to in Chapter VII. was doubtless drawn up.

Various portions of the Abbey were still used during a number of years for municipal, political, legal or educational purposes, and it will be convenient to describe some of these before dealing with the destruction of the fabric.

#### *Continued Use of the Monastic Buildings.*

For the first two years after the Dissolution, in the "Great Hall "of the Monastery<sup>3</sup>" the Guild Merchant continued as of yore to present three burgesses, from whom the Abbot used to appoint one to be Mayor. But as the Abbot was now no more, and his rights had devolved upon the Crown, the appointment was made and the oath administered in 1540 by Sir William Penizon and Thomas Vachell of Coley Park, on behalf of the King, and in 1541 again by Thomas Vachell<sup>4</sup>. The next year this custom lapsed, in virtue of the Charter of Incorporation which was granted by Henry VIII. to the town, and which transferred to the burgesses the sole right of electing the Mayor.

Henry VIII. converted the Abbey buildings into a royal Palace and frequently resided there, Thomas Vachell being appointed supervisor of the Palace. To Vachell's management, moreover, were committed the extensive estates both of the late Abbey and of its dependent priory at Leominster, the appointment being by

<sup>1</sup> "Letters relating to the Suppression of Monasteries" (Camden Society), p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.," Vol. xiv., Part ii., No. 637.

<sup>3</sup> This probably refers to the Hall of the Inner Gateway.

<sup>4</sup> Guilding, "Records of the Borough of Reading," Vol. i., pp. 174, 175.

deed and for life<sup>1</sup>. Not long afterwards the dormitory of the Hospitium was converted into "a very fine stable, stor'd with 'noble horses of the King's'."

On September 13, 1552, Edward VI. paid a visit to Reading, and was received at Colley Crosse by "Thomas Aldeworth<sup>3</sup>, "Mayour, accompanied with the substaunce of th' enhabitantes "of the seid towne, aswell Burgeses as others, in ther best "apparrelles." After various ceremonies, "the seid Mayour "appoyneted by a gentilman hussher rode before the Kynges "Majestie thorough the towne into the Kynges place<sup>4</sup>."

Two years later, in 1554, Queen Mary and Philip of Spain paid a visit to Reading, when "Robert Bowyere<sup>5</sup>, then beyng "Mayour . . . received ther Graces at the upper end of Siveiar "Strete<sup>6</sup>, . . . wher the seid Mayour humblie on his knee wel- "cummed ther Graces and kyssed the mase (mace). . . . And "then the seid Mayour . . . rode before the Kyng and the Quene "through the towne into the Kynges Place, with the mase in his "hond."

This visit is also alluded to in the churchwardens' accounts of St. Laurence's<sup>7</sup>, as follows: "Paid to Ringers at the Kyng "& Quenys cuīnyng and goyng xx<sup>d</sup>."

About this time Queen Mary conferred on Sir Francis Englefield, a favourite of hers, the office of High Steward of the town, manor and demesne of Reading, as well as that of Keeper of the Abbey. But when in 1559 Sir Francis left England, a voluntary exile to Spain, these offices reverted to the Crown, and most of them were conveyed by Queen Elizabeth to the borough.

The Abbey, however, continued to belong to the Crown, and Elizabeth paid several visits to it; one visit of some duration taking place in 1572, when the inhabited portion received the name of "Queen's House."

At the time of the Dissolution the Grammar School, founded in

<sup>1</sup> Patent Roll, 31 Henry VIII., Part vii.; *Journal of Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society*, Vol. iii., p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Camden, "Britannia," Vol. i., p. 169.

<sup>3</sup> Guilding, "Records of the Borough of Reading," Vol. i., p. 228.

<sup>4</sup> i.e. Palace.

<sup>5</sup> Guilding (*loc. cit.*), Vol. i., p. 240.

<sup>6</sup> Now Silver Street.

<sup>7</sup> Kerry, "History of St. Lawrence, Reading," pp. 92-94.

the reign of King Henry VII., probably occupied the refectory or guest-hall of the Hospitium of St. John, a noble room measuring 120 feet by 20 to 30 feet, having a row of pillars supporting pointed arches, which extended down the centre, and thus divided the hall into two parts<sup>1</sup>. But in 1578 the Corporation appears to have taken possession of this hall which had belonged to the school, and by means of a new floor to have divided it into an upper and a lower hall, retaining the upper one as a Town Hall, and relegating the scholars to the lower.

In 1625 raged the great plague in London, causing a general exodus to the provinces of all persons who were able to remove. As a result Charles I. kept the Michaelmas term at Reading<sup>2</sup>, when the Abbey was for the last time occupied as a Palace. The several Courts of Justice appear to have been held in various portions of the Abbey: that of King's Bench in the great hall, the Court of the Exchequer in the Town Hall, and the Court of Augmentation in the school house.

### *The Demolition of the Abbey.*

The above summary shows that Reading Abbey was not entirely disused after the death of the last Abbot. Nevertheless, its demolition commenced at once. Its treasury was plundered, and a general pillage took place as soon as the Abbot was removed to the Tower, *i.e.* in September, 1539, even before his trial. As early as September 8th Thomas Moyle wrote to Thomas Cromwell from Reading that the master Vachell and Richard Layton, Dean of York, had been through the inventory of the plate, and that there is "a chamber hanged with three pieces of "metely good tapestry, which will serve for hanging a mean little "chamber in the King's majesty's house." Another commissioner, Richard Pollard<sup>3</sup>, writes on September 15th that "he has des- "patched certain goods according to Cromwell's direction, and part "of the stuff reserved for the King's majesty's use." And "as for "the plate, vestments, copies and hangings, which we have reserved

<sup>1</sup> Guilding, "Notable Events in the Municipal History of Reading," pp. 7, 9.

<sup>2</sup> "Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series," 1625-1626, p. 122; Guilding, "Records of the Borough of Reading," Vol. ii., p. 266.

<sup>3</sup> Gasquet, "Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries," Vol. ii., p. 372.

"also for the use of the King's majesty," they were to be conveyed to London. This procedure corresponds with what is known to have happened in the case of other religious houses, the first thought of the royal commissioners being to realise the movable and saleable assets, reserving some of the plate, jewels and ecclesiastical vestments for the King.

Moreover, after the Dissolution the estates of the Abbey were quickly sold or exchanged. In 1544 Thomas Vachell was granted by the King on a lease of twenty-one years "all our ferme and "pasture Cowyk, with a close of pasture called the Busshye lease "and honye lease, and our parcell of Demesne lands in the parish of "Tyle Hurste between Hurlock's lane and a parcell of demeasne "landes of oures late in the holding of Christofer Butler comen "called Calcot, Southcot and Anguey meade, closes of land agenst "Bulle Crosse<sup>1</sup>. . . ." Further, he is allowed to purchase for £126 a house and curtilage near Colley lane and lands in Cowick-meade, Whitley, Colley, Brewers' meadows, Rotherbeast, Mylfeld, Westfelde, Pydelles, Castlestrete<sup>2</sup>.

In 1545 the manor of Bulmershe was disposed of to William Grey<sup>3</sup> for £246 16s. 8d. In the following regnal year the manor of Tylehurst (including Northcot, Churchend, Calcot, Shudwike, Theale, North Street, Westwood Row, Southcot and Coley) was sold to Francis Englefield, Esq., for £1,676 2s. 10½d. About the same time a large part of Reading was granted to William Graye for the sum of £2,133 3s<sup>4</sup>. This grant included 101 messuages, 82 gardens, 20 shops, 5 chambers, 2 stables, 5 plots of land, 3 "les Forges," 1 close of land, 1 "dyehouse," 1 barn, 1 "le alley," 3 yards, 1 appleyard and 1 "cotebury," in the parish of St. Laurence; 49 messuages, 47 gardens, 7 appleyards, 4 stables, 2 "les plottes," 9 closes, 4 barns, 2 "Pidells," 2 "lez yardes," 2 "lez Innes" called "le Olde George" and "le Olde Crowne," 1 "le Gaterome," 1 "Berehouse" and 1 croft, "le storehouse" and the "Tymber haise," 2 corn mills, 1 fulling mill, called St. Giles' mills, and 1 "le Lock," called Tanlock, in the parish of St. Giles; 29 messuages, 27 gardens, 2 stables, 2 barns, 4 vacant lands, and

<sup>1</sup> Patent Rolls, 36 Henry VIII., Part xxi.

<sup>2</sup> Patent Rolls, 35 Henry VIII., Part xv.

<sup>3</sup> Patent Rolls, 36 Henry VIII., Part xxiv., m. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Patent Rolls, 37 Henry VIII., Part xv., m. 12.

"lez garden plottes," 5 "lez Backsides" and "Backromes," 2 crofts, 1 "le vineyard," 1 mead, 1 "le Forge," 1 shop and a "stonehouse," 4 gardens in Lurknerlane, 2 corn mills and 1 fulling mill, called "Minster mill," and 1 "le Lock," called "Grayes Lock," in the parish of St. Mary; all of these being in free burgage, except the mills in chief.

Amongst subsequent grants<sup>1</sup> may be mentioned that of Reading and Whitley manors, and the fishing of the Kennet, and two fairs in "le utter Court," granted to Edward, Duke of Somerset, for services rendered.

These brief references suffice to show how speedily the possessions of the Abbey were dispersed.

The fabric of the monastic buildings, however, for the most part remained entire during the remainder of the reign of Henry VIII. The neglected Church would ere long show signs of dilapidation, and the nave may have been unroofed for the sake of the lead, which was doubtless melted down into pigs and fodders. But it was probably not till the reign of Edward VI. that the complete dismantling of the Church occurred.

In the year 1550 a grant was made to the Protector, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, by his royal nephew, of the buildings and lands of the dissolved Abbey, and the Protector was the most ruthless of plunderers, even in that iconoclastic age. Reverence for the symbols of holy things seemed to vanish from the land.

Somerset took immediate steps to turn the Abbey to profit. Between 1550 and 1553 the parish church of St. Mary had to be entirely rebuilt, and the greater part of the required materials were in all probability purchased from the Protector for a round sum, the Abbey walls being used as a convenient quarry, while the roof, yet remaining on the choir and lady-chapel, supplied the necessary timber<sup>2</sup>. Contemporary records show that large quantities of

<sup>1</sup> Patent Rolls, 2 Edward VI., Part v. Details of the passing of other possessions of the Abbey will be found in the Patent and Close Rolls of Henry VIII. and his successors.

<sup>2</sup> Materials from the Abbey were also freely used in the erection of St. Laurence's Church at the close of the fifteenth century (*Cf.* Pettigrew, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, Vol. xvi., p. 177). Tradition asserts that the panelling at the west end of the Hall of Magdalen College, Oxford, came from Reading Abbey. The panelling was probably for the most part purchased in London, but the "waynscotts" may have been part of the spoil of the recently

wood, tiles, lead and stone, and even roofs, pillars and doors were disposed of.

In the churchwardens' accounts of St. Mary's, edited by Garry, the following entries occur<sup>1</sup>:

" Payede for the taking downe of the Quyer in the Abbye and the caryaige home of the same xxj Lodes ...	xs.	vjd.
" payed for the Rowfe in the Abbye ... ... ...	vj <i>ii.</i>	xs. vijjd.
" payed for the carriage of xj Lodes of Lede into the Abbye to be caste ... ... ... ...	ijjs.	x <i>d.</i>
" payed . . . for v dayes taking downe the Rowfe in the Abbye & taking out the Hookes ... ... ...	vjs.	iiij <i>d.</i>
" payde . . . for xxj Lodes carriage of Tymber out of the Abbye ... ... ... ...	vjs.	vijjd.
" payed . . . for the pyllers <sup>2</sup> ... ... ...	xs.	
" pd . . . for v Lode of tylle And A Lode of woode caryng oute of the abby ... ... ...	ijjs.	
" paied . . . for y <sup>e</sup> dore y <sup>t</sup> stoode in the cloister & for stone in the churche ... ... ...	vijjs.	
" paied . . . for x loode of stone cariage out of the Abbye	ijjs.	vjd."

A tradition was current in Reading that Henry Beauclerc, the founder, had been buried in a silver coffin inside the stone sarcophagus, and the keen desire to discover this hidden treasure accelerated the work of demolition<sup>3</sup>. The workmen who were engaged in dismantling the choir, probably broke open the founder's tomb with the royal effigy, and, disgusted at only finding a stone sarcophagus instead of the silver coffin they hoped for, rifled the grave and scattered the mouldering remains. In the words of Sandford<sup>4</sup>, the bones of the King "could not enjoy repose in his "grave, but were thrown out to make room for a stable for horses."

Further destruction took place about 1557, when the "Poore Knights Lodginges" were erected near St. George's Chapel at

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dissolved monastery, which had come into the hands of some one in London, who offered them for sale. In any case, the groups of figures and the heraldic carvings, as well as the frieze, were no doubt executed for the decoration of the College (Wilson, "Magdalen College," p. 83).

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 4, 5, 14, 17, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the pillars on the south side of the nave of St. Mary's, Reading, came from the Abbey.

<sup>3</sup> Guilding, *Journal of the Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society*, Vol. i., p. 98.

<sup>4</sup> "Genealogical History of the Kings of England," p. 28.

Windsor. These "Lodginges," consisting of a series of rooms, together with a kitchen and pantry, were constructed with stones from Reading Abbey, and more especially from the lady-chapel, which appears to have been demolished for the purpose.

Tighe and Davis<sup>1</sup> quote the following entries on the subject from the Ashmolean MSS. :

"The stones for the buildg were fetched from Redding Abbey by water,			
"Masons taking downe the greate Stones of the dores and windowes in the Chappell of or Lady there by the day ... ...	... ...	12d. &	
"Labourers digging Stones out of the walls there p diem ...	... ...	7d.	
"Masons Chusing of Stones there p diem . ... ...	... ...	10d.	
"Labourers digging of Cane Stone out of the windowes for ye Batlem <sup>ts</sup> in the new Lodgings p diem ... ... ...	... ...	7d."	

The work of demolition was continued during the following reign, for by a Charter, dated February 23, 1562, Queen Elizabeth grants to the Mayor and burgesses of Reading the right "to dig, "take, and carry away 200 loads of stones, called ragged or free-stones, in the late monastery of Reading," for the repair of nineteen ruinous bridges within the limits of the borough. Nor even for road-making were these materials deemed too good, since in 1577 the citizens actually make a request "for the stones of the "Abbey for their streets"<sup>2</sup>".

In 1643 occurred the memorable siege of Reading by the Parliamentary forces, consisting of about 16,000 foot and over 3,000 horse, commanded by the Earl of Essex<sup>3</sup>. The town was held on behalf of the King by 3,000 men and a regiment of about 300 horse, under Sir Arthur Aston, until its capture by Essex, the ancient dormitory of the Hospitium of St. John being used as barracks by the garrison.

During the siege, which for ten days was severe, the walls of the Abbey were battered<sup>4</sup> and demolished by artillery placed a short distance off. Within the monastic precincts a fort, composed of earth and rubbish, was erected by the engineers, its ramparts

<sup>1</sup> "Annals of Windsor," Vol. i., p. 606.

<sup>2</sup> "Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series," 1547-1580, p. 548.

<sup>3</sup> Clarendon, "History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England" (Macray Ed.), Vol. iii., p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> The cannon-balls in the Reading Museum probably date from this siege.

extending across the cloisters and the nave of the church from north to south, and terminating in a sort of hornwork commanding the Thames and the adjacent meadows. This defensive work<sup>1</sup> must have involved the destruction of about three-fourths of the length of the nave. Near these ramparts, close to where the north transept joined the nave, a mine seems to have been sprung, hurling some of the vast blocks of stonework into their present positions.

During the further military operations that succeeded the surrender of the town, the fortifications appear to have been demolished<sup>2</sup>, only to be replaced by fresh ones.

A rough idea of the state of Reading Abbey at the close of the Civil War is afforded by a Parliamentary Survey<sup>3</sup> taken in 1650. By this time the Church must have been demolished, as only the briefest reference to it occurs in the Survey, and a large part of the monastic buildings had vanished. In the thirteenth year of Charles II. (1673), the ruins were granted to Sir Thomas Clarges at the yearly rent of forty shillings. Sir Thomas Clarges sold them to Mr. John Dalby and Mr. Anthony Blagrave. Mr. Dalby's share was purchased by Mr. Henry Vansittart, the other portion remaining in the Blagrave family<sup>4</sup>.

Another act of vandalism was perpetrated by General Conway, who, soon after purchasing Park Place, near Henley, in 1754, built the bridge over the valley in the road between Henley and Wargrave, the stones being brought for the purpose from Reading Abbey. Horace Walpole<sup>5</sup> in one of his letters thus alludes to the bridge : "The Works of Park-place go on bravely ; the cottage will be "very pretty, and the bridge sublime, composed of loose rocks, "that will appear to have been tumbled together there from the "very wreck of the deluge. One stone is of fourteen hundred "weight. It will be worth a hundred of Palladio's bridges, that "are only fit to be used in an opera."

<sup>1</sup> C. A. Buckler, "Notes on Reading Abbey" (Add. MSS. No. 36,400, British Museum); Englefield, *Archæologia*, Vol. vi., p. 65, where a plan of the earthworks is given. Another plan of the siege will be found in Guilding's "Records of the Borough of Reading," Vol. iv., p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> "Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series," 1644, 1644-5.

<sup>3</sup> It is given *in extenso* by Coates, "History of Reading," p. 267.

<sup>4</sup> Pettigrew, *Journal of the British Archæological Association*, Vol. xvi., p. 177.

<sup>5</sup> "Letters of Horace Walpole," Vol. iv., p. 300 (3, x., 1763).

A general idea of the condition of the ruins in 1779 is obtained from Sir Henry Englefield's plans and description already alluded to. On the whole, the ruins were much as they exist to-day, except that the refectory was still in existence, and that the west wall of the cloisters was "still about ten feet high in its whole length, and has several doors in it, great and small, leading probably to smaller offices, over what was the dormitory<sup>1</sup>."

In 1786 was rebuilt the Town Hall<sup>2</sup> (now known as the Old Town Hall), involving the demolition of what was originally the Refectory of the Hospitium.

The County Gaol was erected in 1793 near the spot formerly occupied by the cemetery, and it was during the preliminary digging of the foundations that the so-called hand of St. James described in Chapter X. was found.

On November 24, 1815, was unearthed near the High Altar of the Abbey Church the lower portion of a stone coffin, the whole of which had been elegantly carved, "for it exhibits the bases, and the bottoms of the shafts, of a complete row of small columns, or rather half columns, which evidently surrounded the whole coffin. The forms of the columns have been fancifully varied, being alternately semi-circular and hemi-hexagonal<sup>3</sup>."

This coffin was believed by Archdeacon Nares and the Rev. J. M. Guilding<sup>4</sup> to be the original sarcophagus of Henry I., who was buried in the Abbey in 1136. A few years ago the broken fragments of what was erroneously supposed to be the same coffin, since they do not correspond with the details given by Nares, were patched together, and fixed against the wall of one of the apsidal chapels in the south transept of the Abbey Church. By an act of strange incongruity a stone fireplace of the Tudor period, which was found during the demolition of the old gaol, was removed to the same transept and placed above the sarcophagus, under the supposition that it might do duty for a canopied tomb.

<sup>1</sup> *Archæologia*, Vol. vi., p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Guilding, "Notable Events in the Municipal History of Reading," p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Nares, *Archæologia*, Vol. xviii., p. 273.

<sup>4</sup> For a full discussion of the subject the reader is referred to *Archæologia*, Vol. xviii., p. 272, and to a paper by Rev. J. M. Guilding in the *Journal of the Berks Archæological and Architectural Society*, Vol. i., p. 95. Guilding's fuller MS., entitled "The Tomb of Henry I. in Reading Abbey," will be found in the Reading Public Library.

As late as 1823<sup>1</sup> the outlines of the great apse, of the choir and south transept could still be distinguished, the bases of almost all the pillars remaining *in situ*.

*Purchase of the Ruins and of the Forbury.*

In 1831 a serious danger threatened the ruins of the Abbey in the form of a building scheme, which, if carried out, would have involved their complete demolition. In fact, the scheme<sup>2</sup> contemplated using the materials of the ruins for road-making.

Happily the public spirit of the town and neighbourhood was aroused, and a meeting convened in the Council Chamber on July 4, the Mayor, Mr. J. B. Monck, in the chair. As a result of this meeting, a subscription was raised for the purpose of purchasing the remaining portions of the monastic buildings and of the Church, as well as some adjacent land, for the sum of £500. By the year 1835, the project seems to have been completed, and the ruins, with the land referred to, were conveyed by Lord Bexley and Mr. Henry Vansittart to trustees to be for ever used and enjoyed by the public. From this arrangement, however, some portion of the site of the Church appears to have been excepted, for when the Roman Catholic Church of St. James (opened August 5, 1840) was erected, further demolition of the ruined north transept took place. Moreover, in 1843<sup>3</sup> was built the new County Gaol, the walls of which were advanced westward, and swept away the remains of the apse and lady-chapel.

In 1854<sup>4</sup> was held a meeting of the Board of Health to consider the further question of purchasing the eastern portion of the Forbury from the owner, Mr. James Joseph Wheble. By November 11th of the same year this had been decided upon, the total cost being £1,200, towards which Mr. Wheble contributed £400 and the owners of property in Abbot's Walk £365.

In 1859 was constructed the short tunnel leading from the Forbury to the Abbey ruins, carved stones and flints from the

<sup>1</sup> C. A. Buckler, "Notes on Reading Abbey," Add. MSS. No. 36,400, British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> *Berkshire Chronicle*, 19, ii., 1831.

<sup>3</sup> Guilding, "Notable Events in the Municipal History of Reading," p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Reading Mercury*, 9, ix., 1854.

latter being used for the purpose of constructing the arch. By this means the Abbey ruins and the Forbury, originally divided, were brought into intimate connection. A strip of land near Blake's Bridge was also acquired and converted into the promenade along the Kennet, while the Abbey Gateway was purchased from the representatives of Mr. John Weedon and from the Blagrave Estate<sup>1</sup>.

Soon after the completion of this series of purchases, which constitutes one of the most important improvement schemes ever carried out in Reading, the entire area of the ruins was excavated to a depth varying from 2 to 5 feet<sup>2</sup>; many objects of interest were discovered, including the bases of some of the columns of the Abbey Church and the stone seat round the Chapter-house, on which sat the monks during capitulum.

In 1869 were erected on the site of the Abbey stables the new schools belonging to the King's Road Baptist Church, a portion of the ruins being demolished in order to make room for these buildings.

The dormitory formerly belonging to the Hospitium of St. John the Baptist was purchased in 1884 by Mr. Arthur Hill, then Mayor of Reading, and subsequently acquired by the Corporation. Shortly afterwards it was restored under the direction of Mr. S. S. Stallwood, F.S.A., and since 1892 has been occupied by Reading College.

#### *Restoration of the Inner Gateway.*

About 1860 a scheme was set on foot for restoring the Inner Gateway, which for many years past had steadily been falling into decay. The Local Board of Health called in the late Sir G. Gilbert Scott, who reported<sup>3</sup> on the Gateway "as a work of great 'architectural interest and value, well deserving of the most careful 'restoration." This report was acted upon<sup>4</sup>, the Local Board

<sup>1</sup> *Reading Mercury*, 4, vi., 1859.

<sup>2</sup> J. Okey Taylor, *J. Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society*, Vol. i., p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> Scott's report will be found *in extenso* in the *J. Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society*, Vol. i., p. 159.

<sup>4</sup> The new Assize Courts were built about the same time, and were set back several feet in order to give prominence to the Gateway. During their erection the foundations of the Leper-house were dug out, a plan of them being made by Mr. J. B. Clacey.

deciding<sup>1</sup> that "a sum of £500 be voted towards the cost of the restoration, and that a public subscription be invited in order to raise the fund to £1,000, and Mr. J. Okey Taylor be requested "to act as Hon. Sec. for the purpose of obtaining the same." The amount subscribed was not quite equal to that eventually required, in consequence of which some of the carving was deferred to a future occasion. In 1900 the restoration was completed, by the sculpturing of a number of heads<sup>2</sup> and other decorative details from blocks left for the purpose by Sir G. Gilbert Scott, this carving being done by Mr. A. Ohlson, of the firm of Farmer and Brindley.

The eight heads on the North Façade (counting from east to west) represent :

1. A Knight Templar, with Chain Armour.
2. A Pilgrim, with Escallop Shell.
3. The Virgin Mary (with nimbus), to whom, together with St. John the Evangelist, the Abbey was dedicated.
4. St. John the Evangelist (with nimbus).
5. A Benedictine Monk with cowl.
6. A Mitred Abbot.
7. A Benedictine Nun with wimple.

The remaining head (No. 8) on this façade is that of Christ with nimbus, forming the label block to the central archway.

The five heads on the South Façade represent (counting from east to west) :

1. A Man of Law.
2. Queen Matilda, wife of King Henry I.
3. King Henry I., Founder of the Abbey.
4. Wife of a Burgess.
5. A Burgess.

On the South Front, on either side of the archway, will be observed two animal figures. The easterly one probably represents a fox, of which only the hindquarters remain. The westerly one consisted of the body of what was supposed to be a griffin. Sir

<sup>1</sup> A few hours after the decision to undertake the restoration, the central portion of the gateway collapsed during a gale on February 20, 1861 (*Reading Mercury*, 23, ii., 1861).

<sup>2</sup> Some older heads may be observed on the west face of the Gateway, where Scott inserted one, presumably as a type to be followed in carving the blocks.

Gilbert Scott in 1860 inserted two blocks of stone, which have been carved so as to complete the missing portion. The newly carved foliage, chiefly on capitals, has been worked out from old examples found amongst the loose stones in the Abbey.

The fine hall over the archway has since 1890<sup>1</sup> been the habitation of the Berks Archaeological Society.

### *The Surviving Portions of the Abbey.*

This description of the fate of Reading Abbey since the Dissolution may fitly be concluded by a mention of those portions which survive to this day.

Of the original *mur d'enceinte*, the eastern end of the Plummary Wall forms the only surviving section. All four entrance Gateways have disappeared, but happily the Inner Gateway still exists in a restored condition.

Of the Abbey Church excoriated fragments of the north and south transepts remain *in situ*, the latter one retaining the greater part of its altitude. But every part has been stripped of its finished mason work, and robbed of its comeliness.

The bases of two pillars of the central Tower and one or two of those of the Choir have been unearthed, but they do little more than assist in the identification of the ruins. Of the monastic buildings there survive the walls of the Chapter-house, and portions of the Cloisters, Refectory, Dormitory, *Domus Necessariae* and Hospitium. There are also traces of the original mill and stables. But not a single parapet, not a finished aperture remains; and almost all the squared stone has been removed, leaving exposed the compact, uncased flint rubble which formed the core, and which still gives the impression of great solidity.

Bits of elaborately carved Norman and Early English stonework may still be seen built into walls adjacent to the ruins, while yet others are preserved in the garden of St. Laurence's Vicarage and in the Reading Museum. One notable specimen of carving, known as the "Reading Abbey Stone," was discovered on January 24th, 1835, within the precincts of the ruins, and consists of a square block of oolite limestone, about 20 inches high, covered with elegant designs. For what purpose this stone was originally

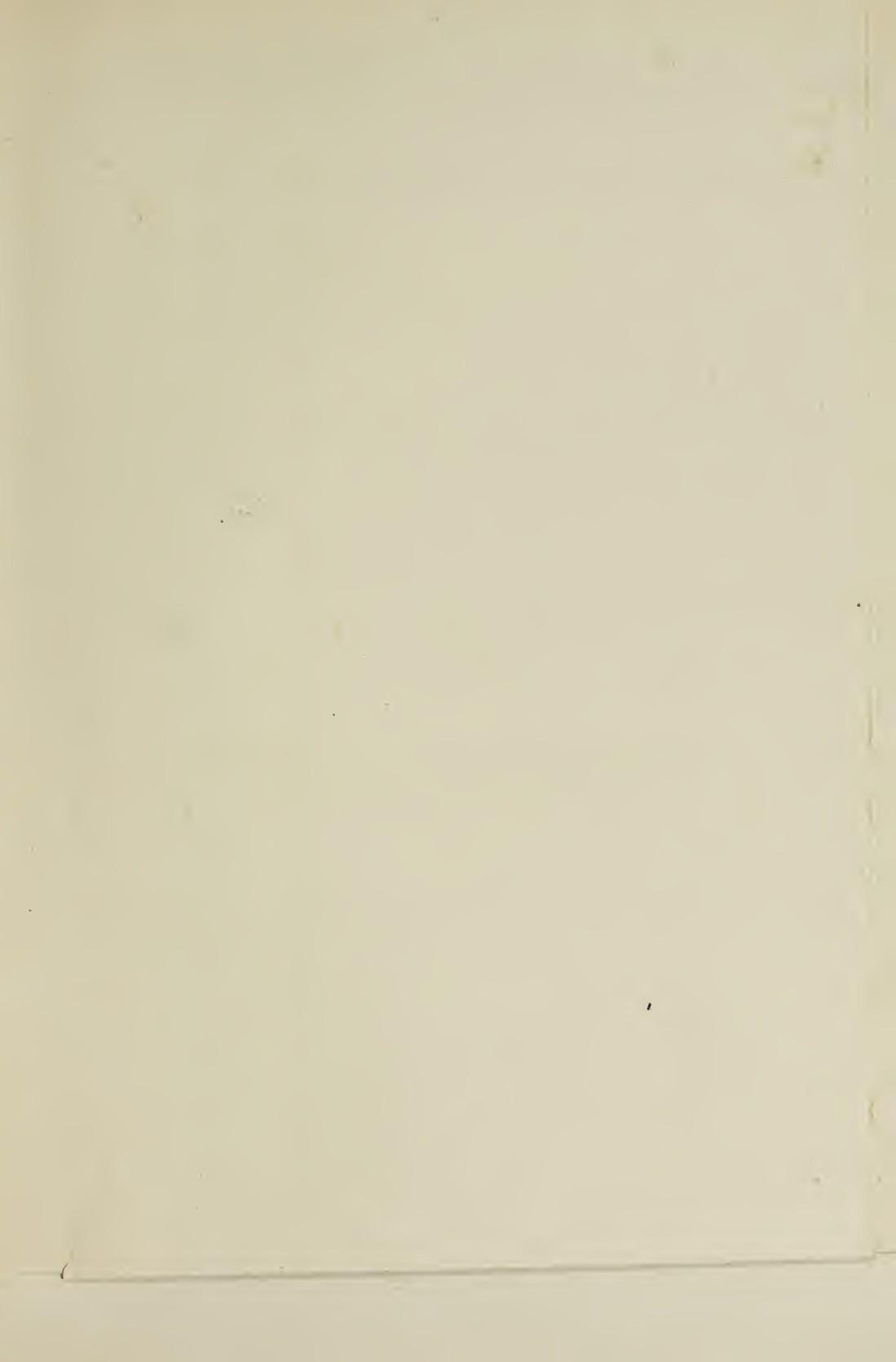
<sup>1</sup> *Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society* (Report for 1890).

intended is uncertain, but now it serves as the baptismal font in St. James' Roman Catholic Church, to which use it has been adapted by the architect, Mr. A. W. Pugin<sup>1</sup>.

Happily the days of civilized vandalism, to which the lamentable destruction of Reading Abbey is so largely due, are now at an end, and it is to be hoped that under the supervision of the Reading Corporation all possible care will be taken of the heirloom that is committed to its keeping.

<sup>1</sup> An illustration of this stone and some further details will be found in F. W. Albury's paper on "Reading Abbey, its History and Architecture," *Trans. Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society*, 1880-1881.





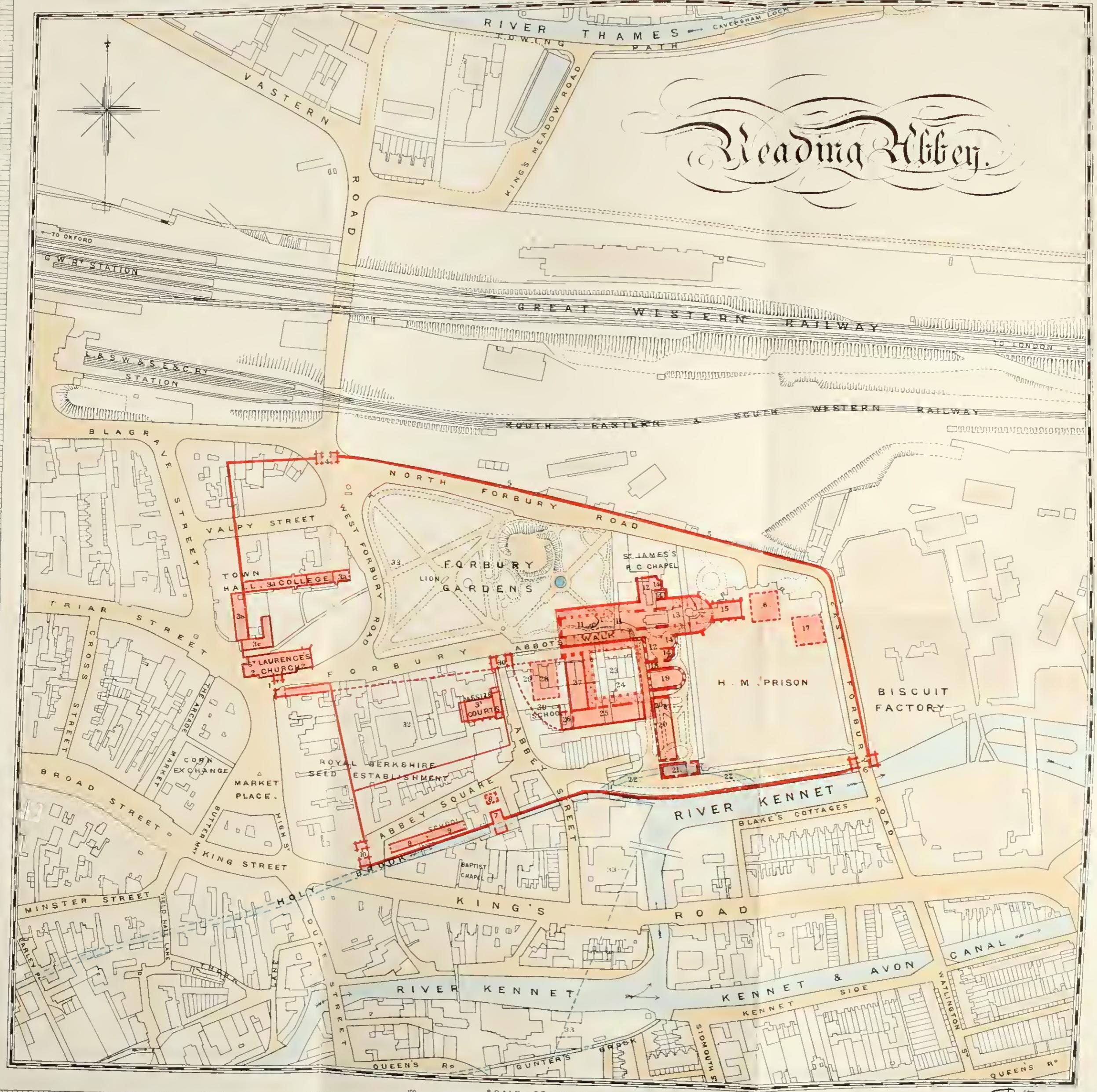


FIG. XX.—Plan of the Abbey.

# Plan of the Abbey.

## REFERENCES.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Compter Gate.  | 16. Cemetery.   |
| 2. St. Laurence's Church.   | 17. Infirmary.  |
| 3. Hospitium of St. John the Baptist,<br>including the hospitium dormitory (3 <sup>a</sup> ), the hospitium refectory<br>(3 <sup>b</sup> ), and the residence-house<br>(3 <sup>c</sup> ). | 18. Vestry and Treasury.  |
| 4. North, or River, Gate.   | 19. Chapter-house.  |
| 5. Plummery Wall.   | 20. Dormitory. At 20a is the staircase<br>leading to the dormitory. |
| 6. East Gate.   | 21. <i>Domus Necessariae</i> (Rere Dorter).                         |
| 7. Abbey Mill.  | 22. Main Drain.   |
| 8. Bakehouse.   | 23. Cloister Garth.   |
| 9. Stables.   | 24. Well.   |
| 10. South Gate.   | 25. Refectory.  |
| 11. Nave of Abbey Church.   | 26. Kitchen.  |
| 12. Transepts.  | 27. ? Cellarer's Lodging.   |
| 13. Choir.  | 28. ? Abbot's Lodging.  |
| 14. Chapels.  | 29. Abbot's Garden.   |
| 15. Lady Chapel.  | 30. Inner Gateway.  |
|   | 31. Leper-house.  |
|   | 32. Garden belonging to Abbey.                                      |
|   | 33. Water pipe.   |







## Appendix j.

### The Abbots of Reading.

							A.D.
1.	HUGH I.	...	...	...	...	...	1123
2.	AUCHERIUS OR AUSGERUS	...	...	...	...	...	1130
3.	EDWARD	...	...	...	...	...	1135
4.	REGINALD	...	...	...	...	...	1154
5.	ROGER	...	...	...	...	...	1158
6.	WILLIAM I. OR WILLIAM LE TEMPLIER	..	..	..	..	..	1164
7.	JOSEPH	...	...	...	...	...	1173
8.	HUGH II.	...	..	...	...	...	ca. 1180
9.	HELIAS	...	...	...	...	...	1200
10.	SIMON	...	...	...	...	...	1213
11.	ADAM DE LATEBAR OR DE LATHBURY	...	..	..	..	..	1226
12.	RICHARD I. OR DE CICESTRIA	...	..	..	..	..	1238
13.	ADAM I.	...	...	...	..	..	ca. 1239
14.	ADAM II.	...	...	...	..	..	1249
15.	WILLIAM II.	...	...	...	..	..	1249
16.	RICHARD II.	...	...	...	..	..	—
17.	RICHARD DE BANASTER OR DE RADING	...	..	..	..	..	1261
18.	ROBERT DE BURGHATE OR DE BURGATE	...	..	..	..	..	1268

					A.D.
19.	WILLIAM DE SUTTON	...	...	...	1287
20.	NICHOLAS DE QUAPPELADE OR DE QUAPPELODE	...	...	...	1305
21.	JOHN STOKE DE APPLEFORD OR DE APPLETON	...	...	...	1328
22.	HENRY DE APPLEFORD	...	...	...	1341
23.	WILLIAM DE DOMBLETON	...	...	...	1360
24.	JOHN DE SUTTON	...	...	...	1368
25.	RICHARD DE YATELEY	...	...	...	1378
26.	THOMAS ERLE OR DE ERLEY	...	...	...	1409
27.	THOMAS HENLEY	...	...	...	1430
28.	JOHN THORNE I.	...	...	...	1446
29.	JOHN THORNE II.	...	...	...	1486
30.	THOMAS WORCESTER	...	...	...	1519
31.	HUGH COOK FARINGDON	...	...	...	1520





## Appendix ii.

### Foundation Charter Granted by King Henry III. (1125).

(TRANSLATED FROM COTTON MS. VESPASIAN, E.V., FOL. 17.)



HENRY, by the Grace of God, King of England and Duke of the Normans, to his Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls and Barons, and to all Christian people, present as well as to come, Greeting:

Know ye that three Abbeys in the Kingdom of England, namely Reading, Cholsey and Leominster, have been destroyed on account of their sins, and that for a long time they have been held by laymen, and their lands and possessions alienated.

I, therefore, by the advice of my Bishops and other faithful subjects, have, for the salvation of my soul and of King William my father, of King William my brother, and of William my son, and of Queen Matilda my mother, and of Queen Matilda my wife, and of all my ancestors and successors, built a new monastery at Reading, in honour and in the name of the ever Virgin Mary Mother of God, and of St. John the Evangelist, and have endowed it with the aforesaid

Reading, Cholsey and Leominster, with their appurtenances, woods, fields, pastures, meadows and rivers, with their mills and fisheries, with their churches also, and chapels, cemeteries, oblations and tithes, and with a mint and one moneyer at Reading.

I have also granted to the said monastery Thatcham and the Church of Wargrave<sup>1</sup>, to be held as freely and fully by the Abbot and Monks as when they were in my own hands.

No person, whether small or great, may exact anything, whether as a due or custom, or by violence, from the men, lands or possessions of the said monastery ; he may not exact military service (*equitatio*), nor service on any expedition<sup>2</sup>, nor for construction of bridges or castles, nor service of horses, nor of packhorses, nor cartage, nor boats, nor labour, nor tribute, nor gifts ; but let the monks of Reading with their servants and effects be free from all gelt and toll and every other custom by land and by water, in passage of bridges, and in the sea-ports, throughout England.

And the Abbot and his Monks may have the privilege of a hundred court and of all pleas in respect of their own tenants and their possessions or of strangers transgressing therein or taken transgressing, with soc and sac, tol and theam, infangenthef and utfangenthef, and hamsocna, both within and without the borough, in roads and foot-paths, and in all places, with all causes which do or may arise.

And the Abbot and Monks may have entire jurisdiction in cases of assault, thefts and murders, shedding of blood and breaches of the peace, in the same manner as belongs to the royal authority, and of all transgressions. But if the Abbot and Monks shall at any time fail

<sup>1</sup> This is explained by the fact that he had obtained Wargrave and Cholsey churches from the Abbey of Mount St. Michael, in Normandy, when he designed the foundation of Reading, and gave that Abbey in exchange twelve librates of lands in Devonshire in the manor of "Budeleia." Cf. Harl. MS. 1708, f. 17b, for the Charter. Thatcham was royal demesne, *temp. Domesday Book.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Du Cange, "Glossarium mediæ et infimæ Latinitatis," *sub "Expeditio."*

to do justice, the King may compel them, provided that he does not diminish the privileges of the Church of Reading.

And let the men of the neighbouring manors come to the Hundred Courts of Reading and Leominster, according to the custom of former times; and if they refuse to come, when summoned, the King may receive their fines, and compel them to appear and to perform their duty.

We have also ordained, through the foresight of our power in the Church and as King, that at the death of the Abbot of Reading all the possessions of the monastery, wheresoever situated, shall remain free and entire, with all rights and customs, in the hands, and at the disposal, of the prior and monks of the chapter of Reading. This we so ordain and appoint to be observed for ever, inasmuch as the Abbot of Reading has no rents for his own use, but enjoys them in common with his brethren. Whoever shall, by the will of God, and by canonical election, be made Abbot, let him not misuse and bestow the alms of the monastery on his lay kindred, or on other persons, but use them for the entertainment of the poor, of pilgrims or of guests.

He may not give lands held for rents, to be held as knights' fees (*ad feudum*), nor may he make knights, except by investiture of the Church (*nisi in sacra veste Christi*<sup>1</sup>). Moreover, he must be careful in admitting those of tender age, but he may admit adult and discreet persons, whether laymen or clerks. No person may hold any of the possessions of the Abbey of Reading in fee-simple (*absolutum*<sup>2</sup>), but by an annual rent and due service to the Abbot and Monks.

No person may hold any office in the house of the Abbot and Monks of Reading by inheritance, but let the decision rest with the Abbot and Monks as to changing their bailiffs and other officials.

I grant and confirm for ever to this monastery of Reading, and to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. Jacob, "The Law Dictionary" (ed. by Tomlins), *sub* "fee."

whatever belongs to it, these liberties and immunities, which I commend in God's name to all Kings of England who shall reign after me to keep, so that God may preserve them for ever.

If any person shall wittingly presume to infringe, diminish, or alter this our decree, may the great Judge of all punish and root him out with his posterity, so that he may be left without inheritance in misery and hunger. But whosoever shall preserve the above-mentioned liberties and possessions to the monastery of Reading, may the Most High, Who ruleth over the kingdoms of men, confirm to him all good things, and preserve him for ever.

“Actum anno verbi incarnati. mcxxv.<sup>1</sup> papa Romano Henrico II<sup>o</sup>.<sup>2</sup>, Romanorum imperatore Augusto Henrico III<sup>to</sup>.”

Witnessed by

HENRY, King of the English and Duke of the Normans.	ANSELM, Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds.
ADELEIDIS, the Queen.	WARNER, Abbot of Battle.
JOHN, Cardinal priest and Papal Legate.	Boso, Abbot of Bec.
WILLIAM, Archbishop of Canterbury— <i>cons.</i> 18 Feb., 1123; <i>ob.</i> 21 Nov., 1136.	GILBERT, Abbot of Seéz.
	RICHARD, Abbot of Mont St. Michel.
	ROBERT, Earl of Gloucester.

<sup>1</sup> Eyton, in his “Itinerary of Henry I.” (Add. MS. 31,937, fol. 140*b*), dates this Charter as *ca.* March, 1125, and as issued in Normandy during the presence there of Henry I., who was absent from England from June, 1123, to September, 1126.

John of Crema, the Papal legate, visited the King in Normandy, on his way to England. He was at Canterbury by Easter, 1125, and Eyton suggests that the English prelates crossed to Normandy to meet him. Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, is not among the witnesses, the reason apparently being that he was acting at this time as Viceroy or “Procurator” for the King in England (Add. Ch. 19,575).

<sup>2</sup> The transcriber of this Charter in the Cotton MS. has erred. For “Henrico II<sup>o</sup>.” read “Honorio II<sup>o</sup>.” (enthroned December 21, 1124), and for “Henrico III<sup>o</sup>.” read “Henrico V<sup>to</sup>.” (*ob.* May 23, 1125), leaving as his widow the Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I.

*Foundation Charter granted by Henry I. 155*

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TURSTAN, Archbishop of York— <i>cons.</i> 19 Oct., 1119; <i>ob.</i> 5 Feb., 1140.	WILLIAM, Earl of Surrey. ROGER, Earl of Warwick. STEPHEN, Count of Aumarle. WILLIAM DE TANCARVILLE, Chamberlain (of Normandy).
GEOFFREY, Archbishop of Rouen.	
WILLIAM, Bishop of Winchester— <i>cons.</i> 11 Aug., 1107; <i>ob.</i> 25 Jan., 1129.	BRIEN FITZ COUNT, of Walling- ford.
WILLIAM, Bishop of Exeter— <i>cons.</i> 11 Aug., 1107; <i>ob.</i> 1136.	HUNFRID DE BUHUN.
BERNARD, Bishop of St. David's— <i>cons.</i> 19 Sept., 1115; <i>ob.</i> 1147.	ROBERT DE HAIA.
GYEFRED ( <i>sc.</i> SEFFRID), Bishop of Chichester— <i>cons.</i> 12 Apr., 1125; <i>deposed</i> 1145.	WILLIAM FITZ ODDO.
SYMON, Bishop of Worcester— <i>cons.</i> 24 May, 1125; <i>ob.</i> 20 Mar., 1150.	HUGH BIGOT.
JOHN, Bishop of Lisieux.	
ODO, Bishop of Evreux.	
TURGIS, Bishop of Avranches.	





## Appendix iii.

### Calendar of Charters<sup>1</sup> in the British Museum, chronologically arranged.

#### I.

**C**ONFIRMATION by Henry I. to Battle Abbey of their lands in Wy (W:), co. Kent, Alciston (Alsiest.), co. Suss., Limpsfield (Limenesfeld), co. Surr. and Hove (Ho:), co. Suss., Brightwalton (Brictwoldint.), co. Berks, Bromham, co. Wilts, Crowmarsh (Craumareis), co. Oxon., and Appledram (Apeldreham), co. Suss., which latter place he gave them in exchange for Reading (Rading), co. Berks, and other privileges as granted by William I., his father.

Witn. Roger, bishop of Salisbury.

At Winchester (*ca.* 1121).

Campbell Ch. xvi. 13.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for this Calendar of Charters connected with Reading Abbey to Mr. H. J. Ellis and Mr. D. T. Baird Wood, of the MS. Department, British Museum. Some of the Charters and Grants are reprinted in the *Archæological Journal*, Vol. xx. (1863), p. 281, and Vol. xxii. (1865), p. 151.

II.

Notification by Roger, bishop of Salisbury, as "Procurator" or Viceroy for Henry I. in England, of the liberties granted to the abbey in all their property, viz. in Reading (Redingia), Cholsey (Cealseia), co. Berks, Leominster (Leoministria), co. Heref., and Thatcham (Thacheham), co. Berks, with a mint and a moneyer at Reading.

At Westminster (1125?).

Apparently issued in consequence of the King's Charter of Foundation (*cf.* Vespasian E.V., f. 17).

Add. Ch. 19,575.

A point of interest in this charter is the mention of a mint and one moneyer as being at Reading. A new coinage was ordered on the occasion of the "Inquest of Moneyers" in 1125. There is a charter of Bp. Roger in Harl. MS. 1708, f. 113 (the Reading Register), relating to the transfer to London, which is quoted in the "Monasticon" and Ruding's "Annals," which should date soon after this charter here calendared (in 1126?). The change from Reading to London may perhaps be associated with the accusation brought against the moneyers of England of issuing a great quantity of false money. *Cf.* "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" (Rolls Series), Vol. ii. p. 221.

III.

Confirmation by Henry I. to the abbey of all privileges, recited.

Witn. William, archbishop of Canterbury, T[hurstane] and G[eoffrey], archbishops of York and Rouen, W[illiam] and S[effrid], bishops of Winchester and Chichester, R[obert] and W[illiam], Earls of Gloucester and Surrey.

At Westminster (1126-27?).

Endorsed: *Carta Regis Henrici primi Gestatoria de libertatibus.*  
 Granted apparently after his return from Normandy in September,  
 1126.

Add. Ch. 19,571.

IV.

Writ from Henry I. to Richard Bassett and Alberic de Ver, and the sheriff, and the burgesses of Guildford (Geldefort), co. Surr., exempting from tolls the men of Geoffrey Purcell, his "hostiarius," in Catshill (Chatishille) and Chiddington (Chedelingefolt), in Goldalming, as in his father's time.

Witn. Milo of Gloucester.

At Winchester (1129-30?). Great seal.

Add. Ch. 19,572.

V.

Grant by Queen Aelidis, widow of Henry I., to the abbey of lands worth 100 shillings in her manor of Stanton Harcourt (Stantona), co. Oxon., to entertain those coming to the abbey at the time, "in termino," of the King's anniversary. She also grants the church of the same manor for maintaining lights before the body of our Lord and before that of the King.

Witn: Her 3 chaplains, Master Serlo, Eudo fil. Alani, Aalard Flandrensis, and 8 others (*ca.* 1139). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,572.

VI.

Confirmation by William [de Albini] Earl of Lincoln to the abbey of grants made by Queen Adeleidis his wife, viz. Aston manor

(“Estona”), co. Hertf.; also lands in Stanton Harcourt (“Stantona”), co. Oxon., with the church. (*Cf.* Add. Ch. 19,573.)

Witn: Hermann and 2 other chaplains, Master Serlo, Heudo fil. Alan., Adelard Flandrensis and 11 others (*ca.* 1139).

Add. Ch. 19,586.

Will. de Albini lost this earldom of Lincoln probably in 1141, and was re-created by Stephen Earl of Sussex about Christmas, 1141 (*cf.* J. H. Round, “Geoffrey de Mandeville”). He was also known as Earl of Chichester or of Arundel.

VII.

Mandate by the Queen Aelidis to Edward, the abbot, and the abbey not to alienate the church of Stanton-Harcourt (Stant.), co. Oxon., or any other of her alms.

Witn. Reinald de Windesor.

At Arundel (*ca.* 1140). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,574.

VIII.

Confirmation by Stephen to the abbey of the land at Windsor (Windesoris), co. Berks, and Catshill (Cateshulla), co. Surr., which belonged to Geoffrey Purcell, on the understanding that Ralph Purcell should hold of the abbey 20 shillings' worth of the land at Windsor, as agreed by a fine before the King: as soul-alms for himself and Henry I. his uncle.

Witn: Geoffrey de Magnavilla, Richard de Luci, Turgis de

Abrincis, Elias de Amundevilla, John "Vicecomes,"  
Robert Burnell, Ralph Purcell.

At Norwich (*ca.* June, 1140?).

Add. Ch. 19,584.

This land in Windsor apparently was afterwards known as Windsor-Underowre Manor. Cf. *Testa de Nevill*, pp. 128*b*, 129*a*, etc.; also *Harl. MS. 1708*, ff. 28*b*, 54*b*, etc.

#### IX.

Notification by Matilda the Empress, daughter of King Henry, to Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, and the barons of co. Oxon., of her grant and confirmation to the Abbey of the church of Stanton-Harcourt (Stantuna), co. Oxon., originally granted by A[elidis], the Queen, and William [de Albini], her husband.

Witn. B[ernard], bishop of St. David's, R[obert], Earl of Gloucester, Humphrey de Boun, dapifer.

At Reading (March-May ?, 1141).

Add. Ch. 19,578.

#### X.

Confirmation by Matilda the Empress, daughter of King Henry, and Queen of the English, to the abbey of the land at Windsor (Windesoris), co. Berks, and Catshill (Cateshella), co. Surr., granted to them by Geoffrey Purcelle, when he became a monk there: as soul-alms for herself, and Henry I., her father, and for the safety of Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, and Henry, her son and her other children.

Witn. Henry, bishop of Winchester, Alexander, bishop of Lincoln, Nigel, bishop of Ely, Bernard, bishop of

St. David's, Robert, bishop of Hereford, Robert,  
Earl of Gloucester, Earl Reginald "filius Regis,"  
Robert, his brother, Brien "filius Comitis," Milo  
"Constabularius," John "Marescallus."

At Reading (5-7 May?, 1141).

Add. Ch. 19,576.

xI.

Writ by Stephen to the bishop of Worcester and the earl of Warwick and the barons etc., of co. Warw., that the abbot should hold his lands and men at Rowington (Rochintonae), co. Warw., as freely as in the time of Henry I.

Witn. Robert de Ver.

At Westminster (1142-50?). Great Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,580.

xII.

Writ by Stephen to Roger, Earl of Warwick, exempting the land and men of the abbey at Rowington (Rochintonae), co. Warw., from danegeld and other exactions, as by the deed of Henry I. and by his own.

Witn. R[ichard] de Luci.

At Reading (1142-50?). Great Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,582.

xIII.

Writ by Stephen to the earl of Warren to allow the abbey to hold

their land at Catshill (Cateshulla), co. Surr., which Geoffrey Purcel gave them by his consent, without disturbance.

Witn. Robert [de Gant], chancellor.

At Oxford (1142-46?). Great Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,583.

xiv., xv.

Grant by Matilda, the Empress, daughter of King Henry and Lady of the English, to the abbey, as soul-alms for King Henry and Queen Matilda her father and mother etc., and for the love and loyal service shown to her by Brien "filius Comitis," of Blewberry (Bleberia) Manor, co. Berks, just as her father had held it.

Witn. Robert, Earl of Gloucester, Reginald, Earl of Cornwall,  
Roger, Earl of Hereford, Unfrid de Buhun, "Dapifer,"  
William fil. Alan, Joscius de Dinan, Walkelin  
Maminot, William Paganell, William Hamonis,  
Hugh fil. Richard, Riulf de Sessun.

At Devizes (1144-47).

Add. Chs. 19,577-19,579.

xvi.

Confirmation by Stephen to the abbey of the manor of Blewberry (Bleberia), co. Berks, to hold as he and Henry I., his uncle, have held it: as soul-alms for himself, Matilda, his wife, Eustace, his son, and his other children, and Henry I., his uncle.

Witn. Matilda, the Queen, his wife, Henry, bishop of Winchester, his brother, Roger, bishop of Chester, H., Dean of Waltham, Earl E[ustace], son of the

King, William de Ipra, W[illiam] Martel, Richard de Luci.

At London (*ca.* 1147-48?). Great Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,581.

The confirmation of this place to the abbey by Eustace, Count of Boulogne, is entered in Harl. MS. 1708, f. 30*b*, and follows the entry of the above confirmation by Stephen, his father.

XVII.

Confirmation by R[obert], bishop of Hereford, of the grant by the abbot of Reading, with the assent of the chapter of Leominster, at the request of Osbert de Eia, to Master A., clerk of Brimfield (Brunfeld), co. Heref., and his parishioners that the bodies of poor parishioners should not be buried at Eye (Eia), co. Heref., but at Brimfield, the chapel at which place is decided to be appendant to the church at Eye.

(*ca.* 1140-48). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,585.

XVIII.

Indulgence granted by G[ilbert Foliot], bishop of Hereford, for 20 days, to all who visited the reliques of St. James the Apostle at the abbey, upon his festival, or within the octave of the same.

(1148-63). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,587.

XIX.

Release by Hugh de Chilpeet to Roger, Earl of Hereford, of the "villula" of Bradford (Bradeford), (in Leominster?), co. Heref., that he

may grant it to the abbey, receiving in exchange Kingston (Kingestun), co. Heref., which the said Earl acquired from Robert Brito.

Witn. G[ilbert], bishop of Hereford, Ralph, the dean, Peter, the arch-deacon, Walter, the arch-deacon, Gilbert, "cantor," with the whole chapter of Hereford ; Baderon de Munemue, Walter de Clifford, Robert de Candos, Henry "frater Comitis," Herbert de Castello Helgot, Richard de Cormeiles, Maurice, "vicecomes" ; and of the citizens of Hereford, Herbert filius Fucaldi, Robert filius Walteri, Ralph filius Iwein.

(1150-54).

Add. Ch. 19,588.

## xx.

Indulgence granted by Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, for 40 days to all who visited the reliques of St. James the Apostle at the abbey, upon his festival, or within the octave of the same.

(1150-60). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,589.

## xxi.

Composition between the abbeys of Reading and St. Alban's concerning the church of Sheephall (Sepehale), co. Hertf., whereby Reading renounces all claims on account of the parish of Sheephall, as pertaining to their church at Aston (Estuna), co. Hertf. : the church of Sheephall to be a mother-church, subject to St. Alban's, who are to pay half a mark yearly to Reading ; the church of Bucklebury (Burchildeberia), co. Berks, to be confirmed by St. Alban's jointly

with Wallingford priory to Reading, who are to pay 2 marks yearly to Wallingford.

Made in the chapter of St. Alban's, in the presence of Robert, abbot of St. Alban's, and his convent, and of Hugh, prior of Reading, and two of his brethren: confirmed in the chapter of Reading, in the presence of Edward, abbot of Reading, and his convent.

(ca. 1152-53).

Add. Ch. 19,590.

XXII.

Confirmation by Henry II. to the abbey of the grants made by Henry I. and Matilda the Empress; viz. (1) in Reading (Radingia), co. Berks, Leominster (Liministria), co. Heref., Thatcham (Tacheham), Cholsey (Chelseia), co. Berks, Whichbury (Wicheberia), co. Wilts, Rowington (Rokintuna), co. Warw., Little Wigston (Wiges-tana), co. Leic., Southampton (Hamtona), co. South., Houghton-Conquest (Hoctona), co. Bedf., and Undesoura (in Windsor), co. Berks; (2) Blebury (Bleberia), East Hendred (Henreda), co. Berks, Marlborough (Merleberga), co. Wilts, Berkeley (Berchelaia), co. Glouc., Stanton-Harcourt (Stantona), co. Oxon., and Thatcham (Tacheham), co. Berks: and also of the grants by Henry I. of a four days' fair at the feast of St. Lawrence, and of a mint and a moneyer either at London or Reading.

Witn. The Empress, Philip, bishop of Bayeux, Earl Reginald, Robert de Novo Burgo, Manasser Biset, "dapifer," Stephen de Bello Campo.

At Rouen (Jan., 1156—Mar., 1157). Seal.

Endorsed: "Carta gestatoria de libertatibus."

Add. Ch. 19,591.

## xxiii.

Confirmation by Henry II. to the abbey of the manor of Aston (Eston), co. Hertf., the men of Aston to have the same liberties as those of Reading and Cholsey (Ceals.), co. Berks: as soul-alms for Henry I., and Matilda the Queen, his grandfather and grandmother.

Witn. The Empress, Philip, bishop of Bayeux, Earl Reginald, Robert de Novo Burgo, Manasser Biset, "dapifer," Jocelin de Balliolo, Robert de Curci, Thomas de Sancto Johanne, Driu de Munci, William de Creuecuer, William de Angerville, G. filius Pagani.

At Rouen (1157). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,593.

## xxiv.

Indulgence granted by Hilary, bishop of Chichester, with the assent of Jocelin, diocesan bishop (of Salisbury), for 15 days to all who visited the reliques of St. James the Apostle at the abbey, upon his festival, or within the octave of the same.

(1147-69). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,598.

## xxv.

Grant of seisin by Roger, abbot of Reading, to Roger de Leituna of the land at Eardisley (Hurteslega), co. Heref., which his grandfather held, claimed by him in the abbot's court against Robert de Brogberia: to hold by the same service as Robert, for half a mark yearly.

Witn. Hugh, "dapifer," Aimo de Coddebroc, and 4 others.

(1158-64).

Add. Ch. 19,594.

XXVI.

Release by the same to William Pipardus of a “nativus” of the abbey, by name Richard filius Sarici Duole: for 2 marks as the price of redemption.

Witn. Amalric filius Radulfi, William de Duddevilla, and  
3 others.

(1158-64).

Add. Ch. 19,595.

XXVII.

Grant by the same to Roger de Scaccario of the land in the borough of Cambridge (Grantebrege), which Robert, the deacon, gave to the abbey, when he became a monk there, and that also which Lieze gave to the abbey: for 7 shillings yearly.

Witn. Robert nepos, Geoffrey, “dapifer,” and 2 others.

(1158-64).

Add. Ch. 19,597.

XXVIII.

Grant by the same to the heirs of Robert nepos Alboldi of the half hide of land in Whitley (Wythele), co. Berks, which his predecessors Anscherius and Edward, abbots, had granted to the said Robert, for 5 shillings yearly; and a “mansura” by Kadeles grava in exchange for the “mansura,” which the said abbots had granted him near the abbey vineyard, for 12 pence, wherein they were to have the liberty called “hyusira.”

Witn. Edric de Lond., Turstan “super pontem,” and 4 others.  
(1158-64).

Add. Ch. 19,596.

## xxix.

Release by William, abbot of Reading, to Oddo Cunseil of 3 shillings out of 5 shillings yearly of his rent for land out of his tenement enclosed in the park of Coombe (Cumba) in Whitley (Wethele), co. Berks.

Witn. . . . Richard Cunseil, Oddo Wauerai, Richard de Sart., and 7 others.

(1164-73).

Add. Ch. 19,599.

## xxx.

Notification by the same, that he has received 53 acres of the land of his man Hamo filius Thurgodi "cementarii," for making his park in Whitley (Wytheleth), co. Berks, and has given him in exchange 53 acres in two lots elsewhere on the same tenure.

(1164-73).

Add. Ch. 19,600.

## xxxI.

Confirmation by J[oseph], abbot of Reading, to William filius Thurgodi of the 53 acres in Whitley (Wythele), co. Berks, granted in exchange, as above, by William, his predecessor, to Hamo, brother of William filius Thurgodi.

Witn. Adam de Hereleie, Geoffrey de Bixe, Henry, his brother, Walter filius Walteri, Warinus, "prepositus," William Beiuin, Walter, "prepositor," Stephen, "clericus."

(1173-80).

Add. Ch. 19,602.

XXXII.

Grant by the same to the same of all his father's tenement within and without the borough (in Whitley, co. Berks), except the land exchanged, as above: for 20 shillings yearly, and services recited, viz. one day's reaping in autumn with one sickle, one day's hay-carrying with one cart, one day's "annonā," one day's mowing of half an acre for the custom called "nedrip," etc.

Witn. Roger filius Renfrei, Edward, his brother, Philip  
Flagmen., Adam de Herleia and 17 others.

(1173-80).

Add. Ch. 19,601.

XXXIII.

Writ by Henry II. to protect the lands, men and possessions of the abbey, and to prevent any plea against them except before the king or his chief justice.

Witn. G[eoffrey], bishop of Ely.

At Windsor (*post Oct.*, 1174). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,592.

XXXIV.

Confirmation by Henry II. of a composition between the abbeys of Reading and Gloucester, in connection with the canons of St. Augustine at Bristol, concerning the church of Cam (Camma), co. Glouc., viz. Gloucester to pay Reading yearly 6 marks (whereof Bristol is to receive a moiety), for holding the church in chief from the king.

Witn. Earl William de Mann(devilla), Robert, Earl of Leicester,  
Fulk Paienell, Roger de St(utvill.), Robert de Stut-

(vill.), William de Stut(vill.), Geoffrey Pertic(ensis),  
William filius Ald(elini), “dapifer.”

At W(oodstock) (*ante* May, 1177). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,606.

xxxv.

Grant by William de Albeni, Earl of Sussex, to the abbey of a mark's worth of rent in Quiddenham (Quidenham), co. Norf., viz., the land which Ralph surnamed “magnus” holds, with common of pasture, etc.: as soul-alms for himself, etc., and for commemorating the anniversary of Jocelin, his uncle.

Witn. Reiner, his brother, Gilbert de Norfolche, William de Alta Ripa, William de Elnestede, Osbern Verrer,  
Roger de Sacristia Rading.

(ca. 1180). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,603

xxxvi.

Confirmation by the same to the abbey of the same mark's worth of rent in Quiddenham, co. Norf.: as soul-alms for Queen Adeliza, his mother, and his father, and Jocelin the castellan (of Arundel), his uncle, and for commemorating the anniversary of Jocelin.

Witn. Reiner, his brother, Gilbert de Norfolke, Richard Aguillun, William de Alta Ripa, William de Elnestede.

(ca. 1180).

Add. Ch. 19,604.

xxxvii.

Indulgence granted by Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter, for 20 days

to all who visited the reliques of St. James the Apostle at the abbey, upon his festival, or within the octave of the same.

(1161-84). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,605.

XXXVIII.

Grant by H(ugh), abbot of Reading, to Aldeth, widow of Edward Burnegate, of support from the abbey, viz. an "annuale" or its equivalent from the chamberlain, a cow in the abbey pastures, of which she is to have the milk, but they the calves, a house, a cartload of brushwood every fortnight, and clothing when necessary.

Witn. Walter de Oxonia, Raimund, Reginald Agnus, Raher,  
Jordan "de infirmaria," Osmund.

(1180-99).

Add. Ch. 19,607.

XXXIX.

Grant by the same to Robert "cementarius," brother of Turgod, of lands recited in Whitley (Whythele), co. Berks, in exchange for his land at Wittenham (Widenham), co. Berks: for 5 shillings yearly and 2 men with sickles in the meadow one day each year.

Witn. Walter "clericus," Raymond "mercator," Alan his brother, William "camberlanus," William "pincerna," Turgisus, Walter "cementarius," Jordan his brother, Archenbaldus and Hamonet de Waltham, Walter Peg.

(1180-99).

Add. Ch. 19,608.

XL.

Writ by Richard I. to the abbey that they hold their lands etc.

free as by the charter of Henry I., and do not enfeoff others in them and recover seisin of any so alienated.

Witn. Earl William de Mand(ewilla).

At Geddington, co. Northt., 12 September (1189). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,609.

XLI.

Composition between H(ugh), abbot of Reading, and B(artholomew), chaplain of Bucklebury (Burkillebiri), co. Berks, concerning a controversy with Joseph, late abbot, whereby the chaplain resigns and has a regrant on condition of a pension of 30 shillings to the abbey.

Witn. Mag. Simon de Scal(ariis), Mag. John de Tinem(uth),  
 Mag. Robert de Chedderwrth, Robert "capellanus,"  
 Hugh, dean of Abingdon, Robert de Walingef(ord),  
 Engelrand de Pratell(is), Alan Basset, Roger de  
 Watam, John de Eppelford.

(1189-99). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,610.

XLII.

Confirmation by Hubert, bishop of Salisbury, with the assent of Geoffrey, archdeacon of Berks, of the grant by the abbey of the church and chaplaincy of St. Lawrence, Reading, for the foundation of St. Lawrence's Hospital, Reading, for the maintenance of 13 poor men in commemoration of Dom. Rannulph de Glanville and Berta, his wife, who educated the bishop.

Witn. Geoffrey, archdeacon of Berks, Azo, archdeacon of  
 Salisbury, Baldwin, chancellor of Salisbury, Mag.  
 Vincent, in place of the archdeacon of Wilts, Robert

de Bellofago, Mag. Simon de Scal(ariis), Mag. Richard de Claie, Mag. Alexander "capellanus," Gauterus "capellanus," Teodeb(ald) Gauteri and Bartholomew his brother.

(1190-93). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,611.

XLIII.

Bond by Gilbert de Baseville to the abbey to pay a yearly rent of 26 pence at Michaelmas for support of the poor, the payment to be made by Richard de Fraxino and his successors as tenants at Lashbrook (Lechebroc) near Shiplake, co. Oxon., as soul-alms.

Witn. Simon, vicar of Shiplake, Joel de Sancto Germano, Thomas de Englefelf, Gilbert Warin, Hugh de Fuleford, Henry "clericus," Robert Wille.

*Temp.* Richard I. Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,612.

XLIV.

Letter from F(elix), archbishop of Tuam, and H(enry de Londres), archbishop of Dublin, to W(illiam Marshal), Earl of Pembroke, reciting a mandate to them from Pope Innocent (III.), concerning the unjust detention by the Earl of property of the bishop of Ferns, dated at Perugia, 3 kalends of June (30 May), in the 19<sup>th</sup> year of his papacy (1216).

(ca. 1216-17).

Add. Ch. 19,614.

XLV.

Mortgage by John filius Willelmi de Pikeshull, to Simon, abbot

of Reading, of 5 acres of land at Showell (Seuewell) in Great Tew, co. Oxon.: for £7 to enable him to recover his inheritance.

Witn. Mag. Harding, "clericus domini Legati," Alexander de Swereford, dean, Philip, chaplain of St. Lawrence, Mag. W. de Linc(oln), Mag. Ralph, official of the archdeacon of Oxford, and 7 others.

*Dat.* the feast of St. Lawrence (10 Aug.), in the first year of the translation of St. Thomas the martyr (1220).

Add. Ch. 19,613.

#### XLVI.

Bequest by Richard Morin to the abbey, with his body, of lands in Newnham - Murren (Niweham), Mongewell (Mungewalle) and Wallingford (Walengeford), co. Berks, Grimesdich (Grime's Dyke), Tuddingweie, and Waldich being mentioned as bounds, with various privileges, rents, fisheries etc.

Witn. Richard, bishop of Salisbury, Dom. John de Mune-muthe, Richard filius Regis Johannis, Henry de Scacario, Walter Foliot, Henry Foliot, Robert de Braci and 10 others.

(ca. 1220).

Add. Ch. 19,615.

#### XLVII.

Grant by William Marescallus, Earl of Pembroke, to the abbey of 72 acres in his wood of Caversham (Cavereham), co. Oxon., reciting the bounds; as an equivalent for 10 marks' worth of land, in which he is bound to them "pro dampnis in gwerra."

Witn. John Marescallus, William Crassus "primogenitus," Hamo Crassus, Henry de Braiboue, Walter Foliot,

Henry de Scaccario, Alan de Englef(eld), and 10 others.

(ca. 1220).

Add. Ch. 19,616.

XLVIII.

Grant by Robert Pictor of Reading (Rading.) to the abbey, at the altar where the daily service is held, of 12 pence rent, which Walter de la Berne used to pay to him.

Witn. Hugh Bulator, Gilbert Ruffus, Gilbert le Taillur, Alan Portarius, Robert Wille, Nicholas de Ponte, Thomas de Henleia, Daniel Wulvese.

*Early Henry III.*

Add. Ch. 19,618.

XLIX.

Composition between Wallingford priory and Reading abbey concerning the tithes of East Ging (Estgeyng), claimed by Wallingford as in their parish of West Hendred (Henred), co. Berks, and by Reading as belonging to their church of Thatcham (Taccheham), co. Berks: whereby Wallingford retains the tithes and pays Reading 26 shillings rent yearly.

(ca. 1225).

Add. Ch. 19,623.

L.

Grant by Hugh de Mortuo Mari, junior, to the abbey of the land in Stratfield-Mortimer (Stretfelde), co. Berks, which he recovered against Simon, abbot of Reading, including La Redmede: his heart and bowels to be buried at the abbey.

Witn. Nicholas, chaplain of Stratfield, Philip de Mortuo Mari,

Roger de Burewardeleg., William de Neumeinille,  
Adam Costarde.

(1227).

Add. Ch. 19,628.

L.I.

Release by Nicholas de Stalle of Wallingford to the abbey of a “selda” or shop in St. Mary’s parish, Wallingford (Walingeford), co. Berks, which he had by grant of Matilda, sister of Richard “Capellanus de la Thele” (Theale, in Tilehurst, co. Berks).

Witn. Alexander Dublet, mayor of Wallingford, Simon Raven, Geoffrey de la Wikes, Peter de Benham, John “le hine,” Peter de la Wikes, John de Walingeford, “clericus.”

*Temp. Henry III.*

Add. Ch. 19,619.

L.II.

Inspeimus by Robert, dean of Salisbury, and the chapter of a sentence by Robert, bishop of Salisbury, dated 7 Ides of February (7 Feb.), in a suit between the abbey and Gilbert de Byham, rector of Thatcham (Thacham), co. Berks: whereby the abbey receives a pension of 20 marks from the church of Thatcham.

Witn. Dom. Robert, dean, Roger, precentor, Adam, chancellor, Henry, treasurer, E., archdeacon of Berks, Th., subdean, Mag. Elias de Derham, Ralph de Eboraco.

*Dat. Salisbury, 6 Ides of February (8 Feb.), 1239. Seal.*

Add. Ch. 19,620.

L.III.

Grant by William, perpetual vicar of the church of Wargrave (Weregraeue), co. Berks, to the abbey of an acre of land belonging to

the church of Wargrave, in return for the remission of a pension of 2 shillings payable to the abbey from the church.

Witn. Mag. Giles, archdeacon of Berks, official of the bishop of Salisbury, Mag. William de Bestlesden, official of the same, Mag. James, of St. Giles, Peter, chaplain of the same church, Richard, vicar of St. Lawrence, Helias, chaplain of Wargrave, Mag. William de Rading, Henry, rector of Pangbourne, John, Robert, Thomas, "servientes de sacristeia Rading."

(1240?). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,625.

LIV.

Confirmation by R(obert), bishop of Salisbury, to the abbey of the acre of land on which their buildings are situated at Wargrave (Weregraue), co. Berks.

Witn. Peter de Cumb., Walter de la Wile, Geoffrey de Bedeford, canons of Salisbury, Mag. Richard de Binham, Peter de Wimborn., William de Castellis, Robert de Wichampton.

Dat. Woodford, co. Wilts, 3 Nones of April (3 April), in the 12<sup>th</sup> year of his bishopric (1241). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,621.

LV.

Grant by William Lunghespeie to the abbey of 40 shillings rent at Broad Hinton (Hentone) and Sharpridge (Scheperige), co. Berks.

Witn. Philip Basset, Henry de Mara, William de Englefeld, Everard le Tyeis, Roger de la Hide, Robert de

Uffinton, knights, Henry del Estane, Richard del Hek., John Pipard.

(ca. 1250). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,622.

LVI.

Indulgence granted by Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, for 40 days to all who visited the altar of St. Thomas the Martyr in the abbey upon the feast of his passion and translation.

*Dat.* Reading, 6 Nones of March (2 March), 1253. Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,624.

LVII.

Letters of protection from Henry III. to the abbey for one year.

*Dat.* Northampton, 28 May, 50 Henry III. (1266).

Add. Ch. 19,626.

LVIII.

Composition between the abbey and Peter de Frogemore, rector of Stanford Dingley (Stanford), co. Berks., concerning tithes in dispute as between the church of Stanford and their church of Bucklebury (Burghildebiri), co. Berks.

*Dat.* Reading, Wedn. after the feast of St. Barnabas (11 June), 1267. Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,627.

LIX.

Indulgence granted by William, bishop of Llandaff, for 20 days to all who prayed for the souls of Nigel de Burgate and Felicia, his wife, at the parish church of Godalming (Godalmyng), co. Surr., in the diocese of Winchester.

*Dat.* Stratfield-Mortimer, 7 Kalends of April (26 March), 1270. Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,629.

LX.

Monition from the abbots of St. Alban's, Westminster and Thame, as protectors of the possessions and privileges of the abbey of Reading, to A(lexander), King of Scotland, to respect the rights of the abbey in the priory of May, co. Fife, a cell of Reading.

*Late Henry III.* Seals.

Add. Ch. 19,630.

LXI.

Inventory of charters chiefly relating to the same priory of May, co. Fife, a cell of Reading Abbey. [Cf. Stowe MS. 552, ff. 117-134b.]

*Late Henry III.*

Add. Ch. 19,631.

LXII.

Inventory of charters in the register of Reading Abbey, Harley MS. 1708, ff. 101b-134.

*Temp. Henry III.-Edward I.*

Add. Ch. 19,617.

LXIII.

Grant by Ela, countess of Warwick, in her widowhood, to the abbey of all her lands etc., in Doddington, co. Camb., viz. the manor of Southwood (Suthwode) and 20 acres of marsh in Northwood (Northwode): as soul-alms.

Witn. Dom. Roger de Mortuomari, Mag. Richard de Stanes,  
Mag. Ralph de Fremingham, Dom. Ralph de  
Hengham "justiciarius," Dom. Adam Gurdun,  
Grimbald Paunceuot, knights, Thomas Hurschal,  
Nigel de Sauntreule.

(ca. 1275). Seal.

Harl. Ch. 54 D. 15.

## LXIV.

Order by John, archbishop of Canterbury, that the doors of the priory of Leominster (a cell of Reading abbey), which had been removed by order of Thomas, late bishop of Hereford, should be replaced, to avoid the chance of scandal among the monks; and that the taking of sanctuary etc. should be facilitated by building a chapel to St. Thomas the Martyr within the year: with the approval of Richard, bishop-elect of Hereford.

*Dat.* Sugwas, near Hereford, 7 Ides of January (7 Jan.), 1282.

Add. Ch. 19,632.

## LXV.

Covenant by Robert, abbot of Reading, and the convent, with Ela Longespye, Countess of Warwick, to assign (in lieu of 210 marks received by them for the custody of the manor of Shenston [Schenstan], co. Staff., which they had by grant of the said countess "ad pie-tanciam") 10 marks yearly from the revenues of the priory of May, co. Fife. (a cell of Reading), and 5 marks of rent at Sheffield (Scheufeud) in Theale, co. Berks, or in default 15 marks yearly from the manor of Houghton-Conquest (Hogthon), co. Bedf.; and 20 marks yearly from the manor of Southwood (Suwude) in Doddington, co. Camb., which they had by grant of the Countess, "ad species compandas etc."

*Dat.* Reading, Saturday after Christmas (25 Dec.), 1284.

Add. Ch. 19,633.

## LXVI.

Sale by Robert (de Burgate), abbot of Reading, to Matilda, widow

of John Ferlyng, of the wardship and marriage of John, son of the said John Ferlyng: for 12 marks.

*Dat.* Reading, the eve of St. Peter and St. Paul (29 June), 1286.  
Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,634.

LXVII.

Indulgence granted by John, archbishop of Dublin, for 40 days to all who visited and bestowed donations upon the abbey.

*Dat.* Reading, 7 Kalends of July (25 June), 1292.

Add. Ch. 19,635.

LXVIII.

Acquittance by Roger Dardocii, Florentine merchant, to the abbey for £355 19s. 2½d. for the "decima Terræ Sanctæ," levied by Pope Clement V.

*Dat.* London, 5 July, 1293. Seal of the dean of St. Paul's.

Add. Ch. 19,636.

LXIX.

Notification by the bishops of Lincoln and London, collectors of the "decima Terræ Sanctæ," to the abbot to take the oath as receiver of the same in the archdeaconries of Berks. and Wilts., for 2 years.

*Dat.* Westminster, 22 April, 1306. Seals.

Add. Ch. 19,637.

LXX.

Resignation by Antonius de Bradeneye, rector of Thatcham (Thaccham), co. Berks., of the church of Thatcham into the hands of the prior of Wallingford, sub-deputy appointed by Mag. Gregorius de Placentia, "archipresbiter plebis de Monte Cilice," papal chaplain, and

the abbots of Chertsey and Missenden, deputies in the matter of its appropriation.

*Dat.* Reading, 20 November, 1315. Seals of the rector and of the bishop of Bath and Wells. Followed by an attestation by William de Oterhampton, public notary.

Witn. Walter de Helme, public notary, Fr. William de Henreth, Maurice de Sutton, William de Colham, monks, Mag. Vbertus "dictus le Constable," Dom. William de Monteforti.

Add. Ch. 19,638.

LXXI.

Confirmation by Tydo de Varesio, archdeacon of Berks, in the name of the bishop of Salisbury, of the appropriation to the abbey of the church of Thatcham (Taccham), co. Berks.

*Dat.* Toulouse, Wednesday after Easter (3 April), 1317. Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,639.

LXXII.

Sentence by the prior of Hurley in a suit between the abbey and Dom. William de Petresfelde, perpetual vicar of Compton (Comptone), co. Berks, concerning a pension payable to them from the church of Compton, hereby confirmed.

*Dat.* Hurley, the Purification of the B.V.M. (2 Feb.), 1328.

Add. Ch. 19,640.

LXXIII.

Views of frankpledge at Julianeland for Bucklebury (Burghil-deb . . .) etc., co. Berks.

*Dat.* Monday after the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (24 June),  
30 Edward III. (1357).

Add. Ch. 19,642.

LXXIV.

Compotus Fr. John de Chippenham, almoner of the abbey.

*Dat.* Mich. 49 Edward III.—Mich. 50 Edward III. (1375-76).

Add. Ch. 19,641.

LXXV.

Compotus of Fr. John Aldesle, almoner of the abbey.

*Dat.* Mich. 7 Richard II.-Mich. 8 Richard II. (1383-84).

Add. Ch. 19,643.

LXXVI.

Exemplification of the record of proceedings in a chancery suit  
touching the privileges of the abbey.

*Dat.* Westminster, 1 March, 13 Richard II. (1390).

Add. Ch. 19,644.

LXXVII.

Compotus of Fr. John de Aldesle, almoner of the abbey.

*Dat.* Mich. 13 Richard II.-Mich. 14 Richard II. (1389-90).

Add. Ch. 19,645.

LXXVIII.

Compotus of the same.

*Dat.* Mich. 15 Richard II.-Mich. 16 Richard II. (1391-92).

Add. Ch. 19,646.

LXXIX.

Confirmation by Henry (Beaufort), bishop of Lincoln, to the

abbey of pensions payable from various churches in the diocese, viz.  
 20 marks from Stanton-Harcourt (Staunton Harcourt), co. Oxon.,  
 30 shillings from Hanborough (Hanneburgh), co. Oxon., and  
 20 shillings from Aston, co. Hertf.

*Dat.* Notley, co. Bucks., 13 May, 1403.

Add. Ch. 19,647.

LXXX.

Licence by Robert, bishop of Salisbury, to Henry Talbote and Agnes, his wife, to celebrate divine service in the oratory attached to the new hospice in London Street, Reading.

*Dat.* Sonning, co. Berks, 10 January, 1410.

Add. Ch. 19,648.

LXXXI.

Compotus of Fr. Henry de Sparkford, "infirmarius" of the abbey.

*Dat.* Mich. 13 Henry IV.-Midsummer 1 Henry V. (1412-13).

Compotus of Fr. John Sutton, "infirmarius" of the abbey.

*Dat.* Midsummer-Mich. 1 Henry V. (1413).

Add. Ch. 19,649.

LXXXII.

Licence by Robert, bishop of Salisbury, with the assent of John Norton, archdeacon of Berks, to the abbey to receive the revenues of the church of St. Lawrence, whenever vacant, for the support of St. Lawrence's Hospital.

*Dat.* Sonning, co. Berks, 11 August, 1435.

Followed by the approbations of John Norton, archdeacon of Berks, dated the same day; and of Nicholas Bildeston, dean of Salisbury, and the chapter, dated Salisbury, 1 September, 1436.

Add. Ch. 19,650.

*Calendar of Charters in British Museum.* 185

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LXXXIII.

Exemplification of the record of proceedings in a chancery suit touching the privileges of the abbey.

*Dat.* Westminster, 16 February, 19 Henry VI. (1441). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,651.

LXXXIV.

Compotus of Fr. Gilbert London., sacristan of the abbey.

*Dat.* Mich. 21 Henry VI.-Mich. 22 Henry VI. (1442-43).

Add. Ch. 19,652.

LXXXV.

Compotus of Thomas Barbour, collector of rent at . . . . for Whitley (Whitle) etc., co. Berks.

*Dat.* Mich. 24 (Henry VI.?) - Mich. 25 (Henry VI.?) (1445-46).

Add. Ch. 19,653.

LXXXVI.

General pardon to John Thorne, the abbot, and the abbey, with a proviso that it shall not extend to any concerned in the murder of Adam Moleyns (at Portsmouth, Jan. 1450) and of William Ascough (at Edington, co. Wilts, 29 June, 1450).

*Dat.* Westminster, 14 August, 30 Henry VI. (1452). Seal.

Add. Ch. 19,654.

LXXXVII.

Letters patent from Henry VI. to the sheriff of co. Warw., and the king's escheator, that the abbey be not molested in the enjoyment of its privileges and immunities.

*Dat.* Westminster, 23 April, 37 Henry VI. (1459).

Add. Ch. 19,655.

## LXXXVIII.

Compotus of Fr. John Bristow, almoner of the abbey.

*Dat.* Mich. 8 Edward IV.-Mich. 9 Edward IV. (1468-69).

Add. Ch. 19,656.

## LXXXIX.

Compotus of Fr. John London., "sartinarius" of the abbey (in charge of tailoring).

*Dat.* Mich. 15 Edward IV.-Mich. 16 Edward IV. (1475-76).

Add. Ch. 19,657.

## XC.

Compotus of Fr. Henry Haw, cellarer of the abbey.

*Dat.* Mich. 4 Henry VIII.-Mich. 5 Henry VIII. (1511-12).

Add. Ch. 19,658.

## XCI.

Compotus of Fr. Walter Preston, keeper of the chapel of the B.V.M. in the abbey.

*Dat.* Mich. 28 Henry VIII.—Mich. 29 Henry VIII. (1536-37).

Add. Ch. 19,659.

## Charters relating indirectly to Reading Abbey.

## I.

Grant by William, Earl of Warren, to Lewes priory of all the lands held by them in his fee, and tithes of all his lands etc., in England: granting the priory seisin by the hair of the head of himself

and of his brother Ralph de Warren, cut off before the altar by Henry (de Blois), bishop of Winchester.

Witn. Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, Henry (de Blois),  
bishop of Winchester, Robert, bishop of Bath,  
Ascelin, bishop of Rochester, Edward, abbot of  
Reading, Walter, abbot of Battle, Walter, prior of  
Canterbury, Walter, archdeacon of Canterbury,  
Richard, dean of Chichester, Robert, archdeacon of  
Chichester, William, Earl of Chichester.

(1142-47).

Cotton. Ch. XI. 56.

II.

Grant by Elias filius Herewardi de Pangeburne to William filius  
Elie de Englefeld of a messuage and 6 acres of land in Pangbourne  
(Pangeburne), co. Berks.: in the court of H(ugh), abbot of Reading,  
for one mark, and a rent of 6 pence.

Witn. Thomas de Beregefelde, Hugh filius Richeri, and 12  
others.

(1190-99).

Add. Ch. 7,202.

III.

Bond of the abbot and convent of Missenden to William de Engle-  
feld, knight, to provide a chantry at Shiplake (Sipplake), co. Oxon.,  
for his benefit.

Witn. Peter filius Ogeri, Simon, vicar of Shiplake, Thomas de  
Benefeld.

(ca. 1240). Two seals.

Add. Ch. 20,370.

IV.

Bull of Pope Gregory VIII. to the priors of Reading, Sherborne,

and Poughley to adjudicate in a suit between the above parties concerning the chapel at Shiplake (Sipplake), co. Oxon.

*Dat.* Lateran, 9 Kalends of August (24 July), in the 14<sup>th</sup> year of his papacy (1241). Bulla.

Add. Ch. 20,371.

V.

Settlement of the above suit by the adjudicators named.

Witn. John de Sancto Egidio, archdeacon of Oxford, Walter, rector of South Stoke, William, vicar of Aldermaston.

*Dat.* the eve of St. Andrew (30 Nov.), 1242. Five seals.

Add. Ch. 20,372.

VI.

Bull of Pope Innocent IV. to the precentor of Reading to enforce the above agreement.

*Dat.* Lyons, the Kalends of April (1 April), in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of his papacy (1251).

Add. Ch. 20,373.

VII.

Fragment of a contemporary copy of the final royal foundation charter of Eton College, reciting and confirming all previous grants. Among the bishops and abbots witnessing is John, abbot of Reading.

*Dat.* at the Parliament at Westminster, 25 February, 23 Henry VI. (1445), to 5 March, 24 Henry VI. (1446).

Imperfect at the beginning.

Cotton. Ch. XIII. 14.



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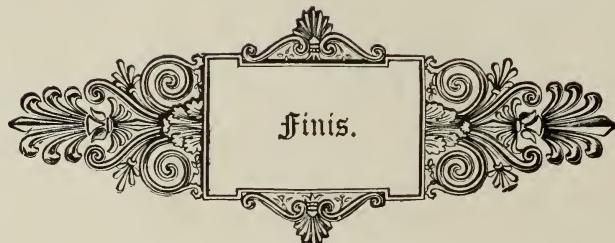
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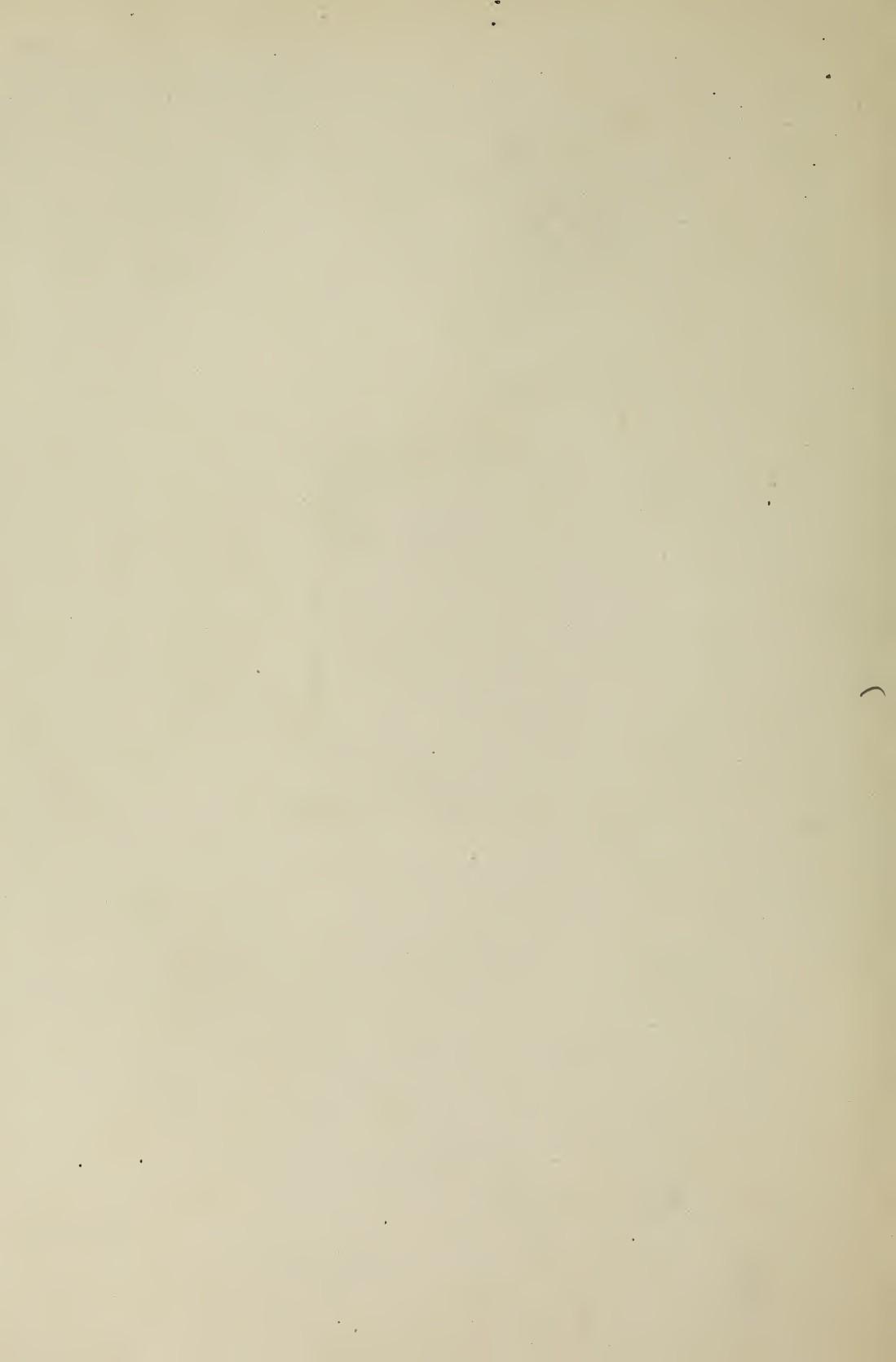
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